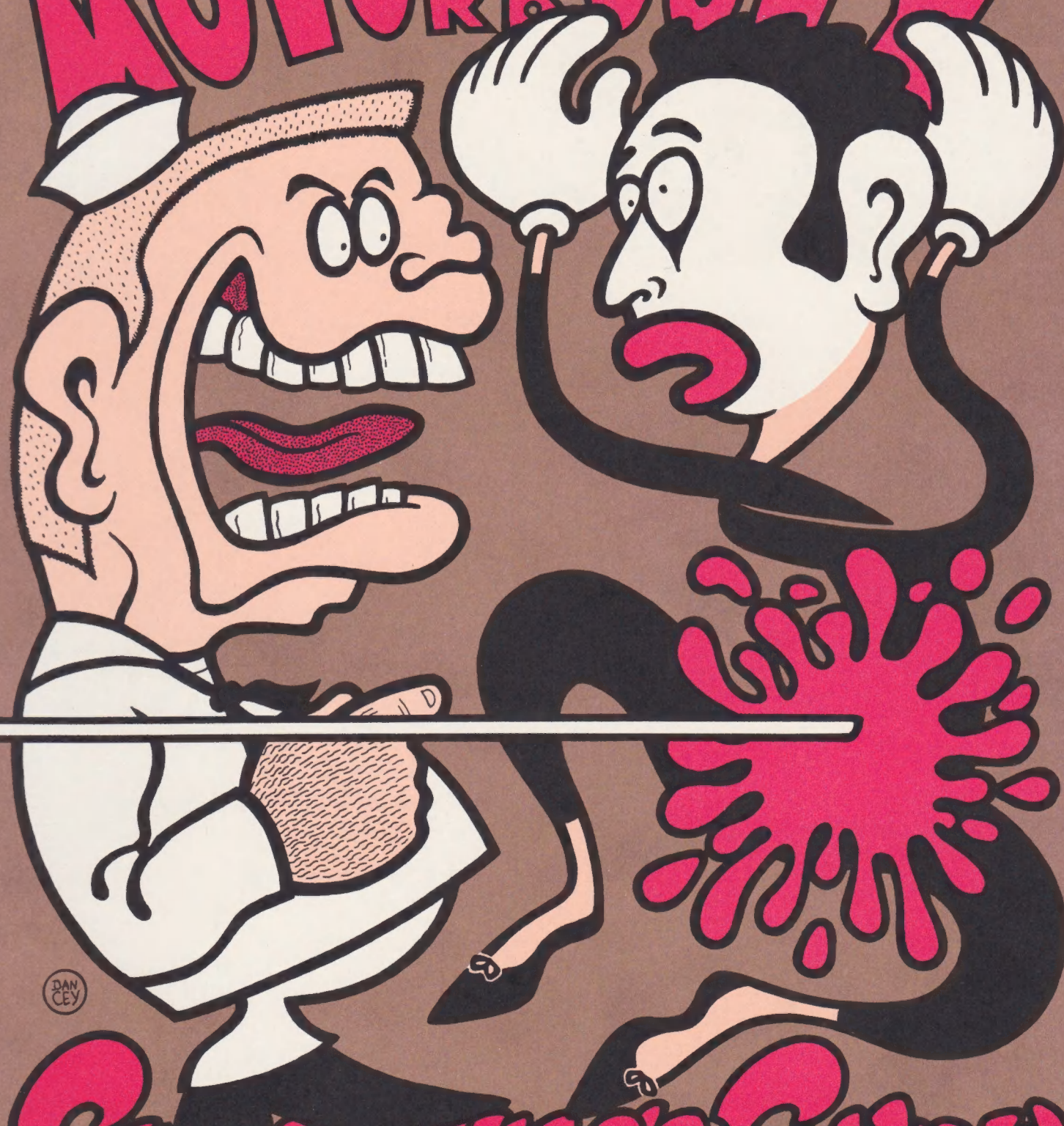




STOOGES MC5 IGGY HARRY CREWS



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DAN  
CEY

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# MOTORBOOTY



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FIVE

WINTER  
1990

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completely sold out.

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THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF

MORT  
AND  
MUFFIN

... STRUGGLING GAMELY THROUGH THE TRAVAILS OF PUBERTY AND HONORS SCIENCE CLASSES!

# SCIENCE FAIR?

UH, HI, MORT!

...SAY, UH, SINCE YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE, LIKE, UH, MY... ~~BOYFRIEND~~ THIS TERM, YA WANT TO, MAYBE, GO GET A SODA SOMEWHERE THIS WEEKEND...?

SOMEPLACE WHERE NOBODY'LL SEE US !!?

ER... BY THE WAY... CAN I BORROW YOUR NOTES FROM CHEMISTRY FROM LAST WEEK--?

UH, SURE, MUFFIN! ANYTHING! ER, WELL... MY DAD'S ALMOST SURE TO HIKE MY ALLOWANCE IF I DO WELL AT THE ST. EGREGIOUS SCIENCE FAIR NEXT WEEK...

HEY—

WHY THE HELL WOULD "THE MUFF" BE SO BUDDY-BUDDY WITH MORT PESTLE WHEN EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THE CLASS STUD, ELMER BRAUNSCHWEIGER, IS JUST ABOUT BUSTING TO INSERT TAB A INTO SLOT B?

I SUSPECT SOME MENTAL MIDGET MACHIAVELLIANISM HERE...

...AND THEN I CAN TAKE THIS BABE SOMEWHERE AN' REALLY SHOW HER OFF !!

C'MON, LOUISE! THIS IS A HALF-POUND OF THE FINEST CLEVELAND WINDOWBOX! I'M OFFERIN' IT TO YOU FOR NEXT TO NUTHIN' !!

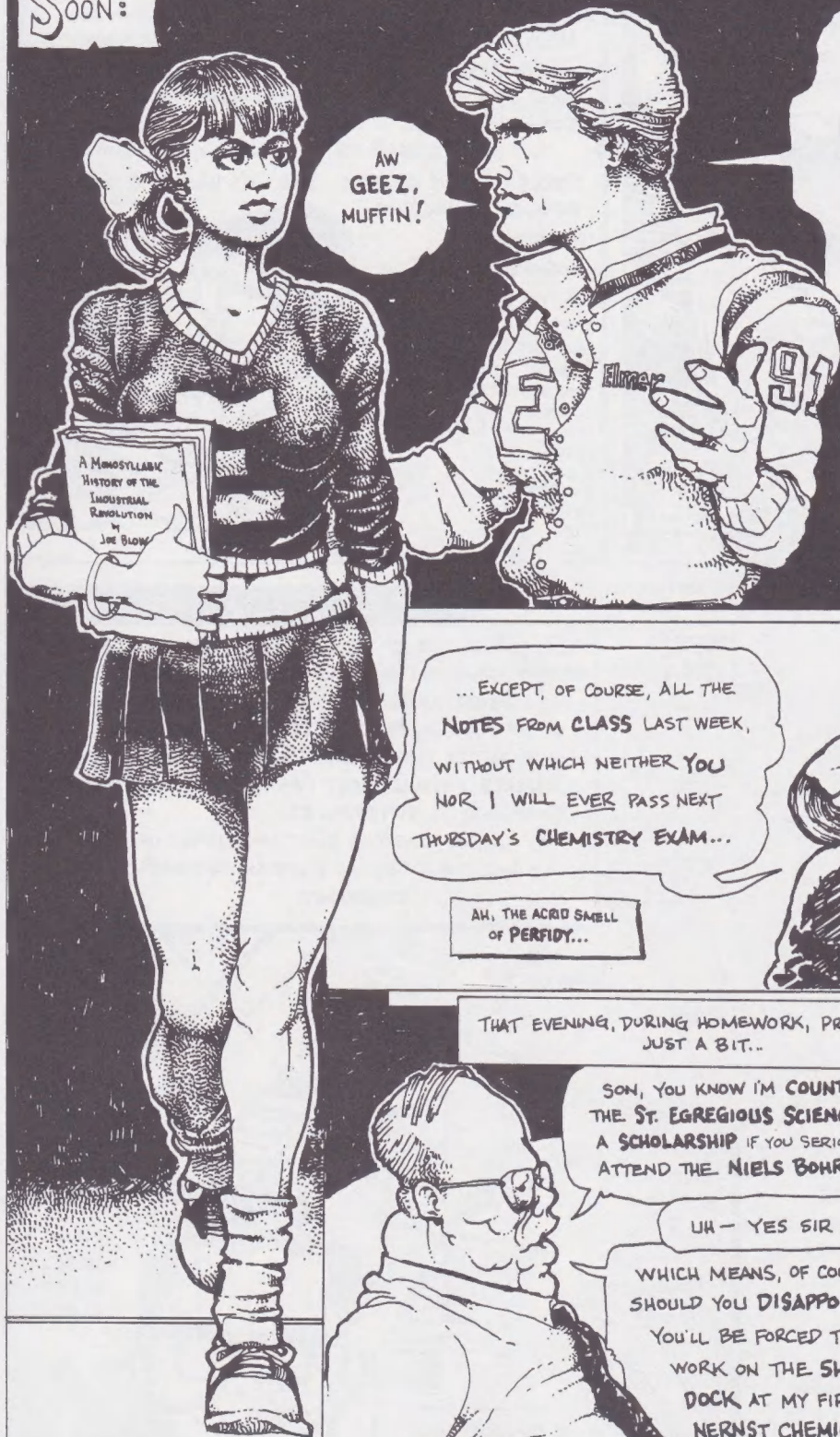
OH, BARF.

HA  
HA HA  
HEH HEH  
HEH

WEED



SOON:



AW  
GEEZ,  
MUFFIN!

I JUST DON'T UNNERSTAND WHY YOU  
GOTTA HANG OUT WITH MY GEEKAZOID  
LAB PARTNER, THAT LITTLE MORT PESTLE,  
WHEN HERE I AM THE CAPTAIN OF THE  
JAI ALAI FONTON, NOTED B.M.O.C., AND  
THE ONLY GUY TO TAKE YOU TO NEXT  
WEEK'S ST. EGREGIOUS SWEETHEART  
DANCE CLUB INFERNO!

WHAT COULD THAT LITTLE PORK  
RIND HAVE THAT I AIN'T GOT!?

OH, ABSOLUTELY *NOTHING*.  
MY DELECTABLE STUD PUPPY!!!

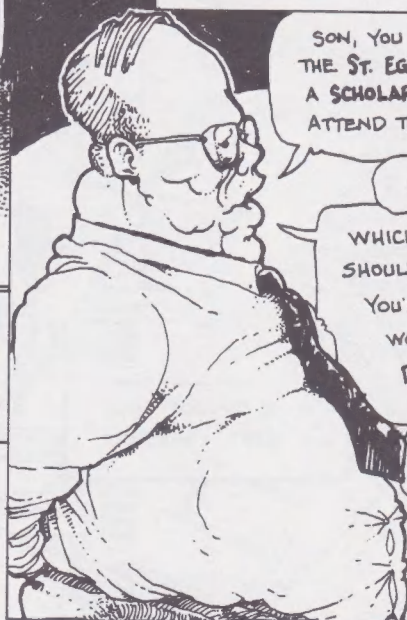
... EXCEPT, OF COURSE, ALL THE  
NOTES FROM CLASS LAST WEEK,  
WITHOUT WHICH NEITHER YOU  
NOR I WILL EVER PASS NEXT  
THURSDAY'S CHEMISTRY EXAM...

AH, THE ACID SMELL  
OF PERFDY...



HMMM -  
GOOD  
POINT.

THAT EVENING, DURING HOMEWORK, PROFESSOR PESTLE UPS THE STAKES  
JUST A BIT...



SON, YOU KNOW I'M COUNTING ON YOUR ENTRY IN  
THE ST. EGREGIOUS SCIENCE FAIR TO WIN YOU  
A SCHOLARSHIP IF YOU SERIOUSLY EXPECT TO  
ATTEND THE NIELS BOHR ACADEMY NEXT FALL...

UH - YES SIR ...

WHICH MEANS, OF COURSE, THAT  
SHOULD YOU DISAPPOINT ME,  
YOU'LL BE FORCED TO GO TO  
WORK ON THE SHIPPING  
DOCK AT MY FIRM, WALTER  
NERNST CHEMICALS INC.

WHERE, MAY I SAY, OUR PRODUCTS  
ARE NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT.

SO TO SPEAK.

ATTEMPTED INSIDE  
CHEMICAL JOKE

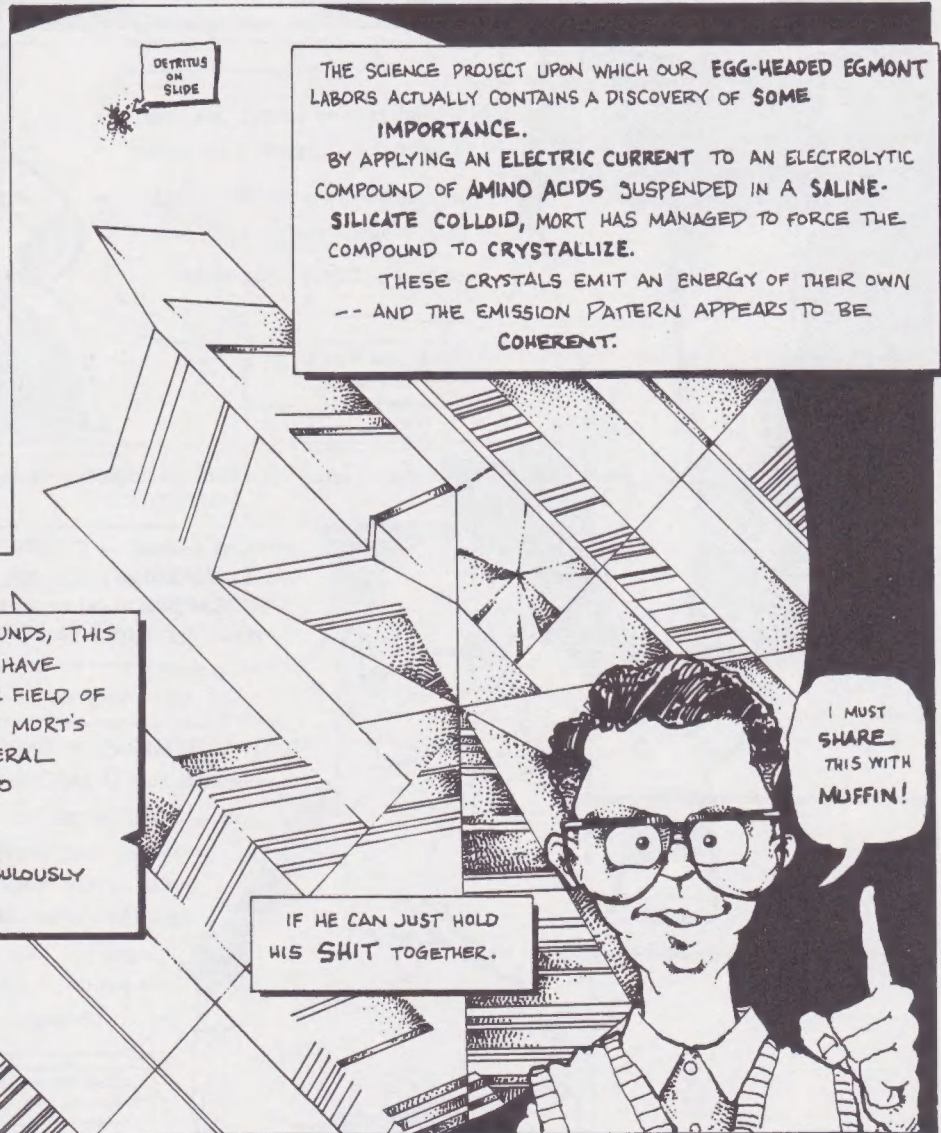
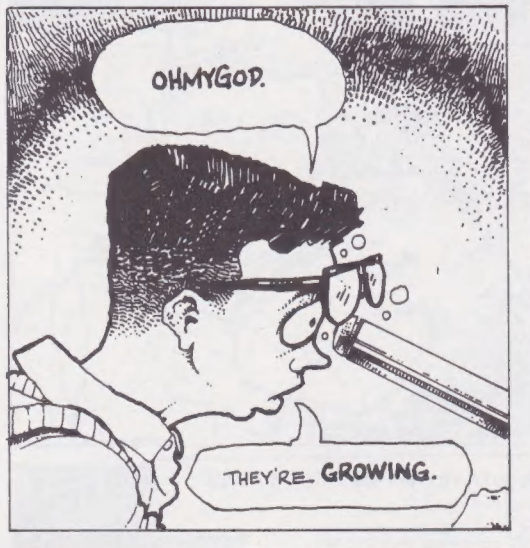
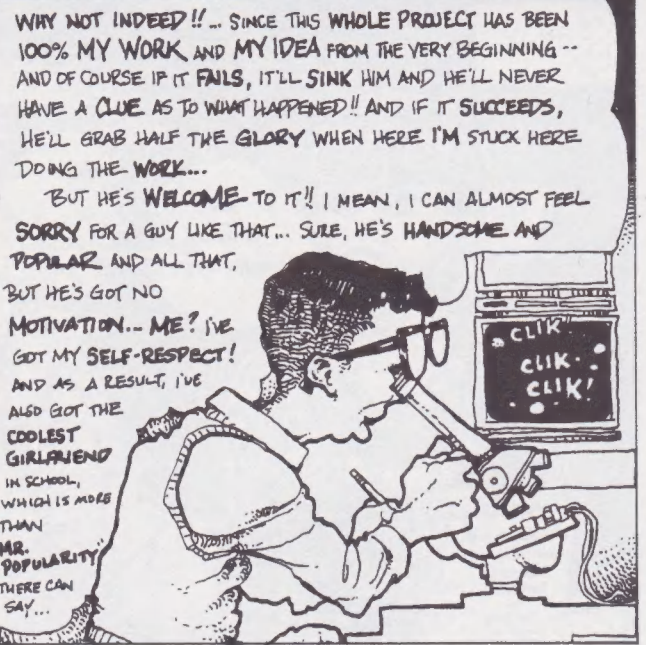


UH... YOU  
CAN COUNT  
ON ME,  
DAD!  
(CHOKE!)

PAGE 2  
LATES



THE NEXT DAY, IN THE ST. EGREGIOUS HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE LABS...



THE SCIENCE PROJECT UPON WHICH OUR EGG-HEADED EGMONT LABORS ACTUALLY CONTAINS A DISCOVERY OF SOME IMPORTANCE.

BY APPLYING AN ELECTRIC CURRENT TO AN ELECTROLYTIC COMPOUND OF AMINO ACIDS SUSPENDED IN A SALINE-SILICATE COLLOID, MORT HAS MANAGED TO FORCE THE COMPOUND TO CRYSTALLIZE.

THESE CRYSTALS EMIT AN ENERGY OF THEIR OWN -- AND THE EMISSION PATTERN APPEARS TO BE COHERENT.

GIVEN ENOUGH TIME AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS, THIS INNOCUOUS-SEEMING DISCOVERY COULD HAVE FAR-REACHING RAMIFICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF MICROELECTRONICS. THE POSSESSOR OF MORT'S FORMULA COULD VIRTUALLY FORCE SEVERAL LARGE, POWERFUL CORPORATIONS INTO BANKRUPTCY.

MORT IS IN A POSITION TO BECOME FABULOUSLY WEALTHY, POWERFUL AND FAMOUS...

IF HE CAN JUST HOLD HIS SHIT TOGETHER.



AND OFF HE GOES!!  
UNHEEDING,  
UNSUSPECTING!

INNOCENCE, LOVE, TRUST-- CHARGING BLINDLY AHEAD, HALF A LEAGUE,  
HALF A LEAGUE, HALF A LEAGUE ON, TO BE **SPLATTERED** AGAINST THE  
**LOCKERS!!** ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE LOST GENERATION, MARCHING  
OFF TO HIS EMOTIONAL VERDUN!  
I LOVE THIS STUFF!!

OH MY GOD ---!!  
MUFFIN NEVER LOVED ME, I'M THE  
LAUGHINGSTOCK OF THE WHOLE FUCKING  
SCHOOL, I WISH I WERE **DEAD!!!**  
AAAAAAAKK!!

MORT - HEY MORT! TRY TO REMEMBER WHAT  
F. SCOTTY FITZGERALD SAID IN "THE GREAT GATSBY":  
"REALITY IS ONLY FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT  
HANDLE **HARD**  
**DRUGS!**"

...OR WAS IT  
HEMINGWAY?

BOO  
HOO  
HOO  
HOO  
HOO

FULL-BODY  
GROPE!!

AS HALL MONITOR,  
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD  
BREAK THIS UP--  
ONLY I APPEAR TO  
BE ACHIEVING MY FIRST  
ERECTION IN YEARS!

THE S&P RUBE  
IS A-RUNNIN' IN  
THOSE VEINS,  
MR. FINKELBAUM!!

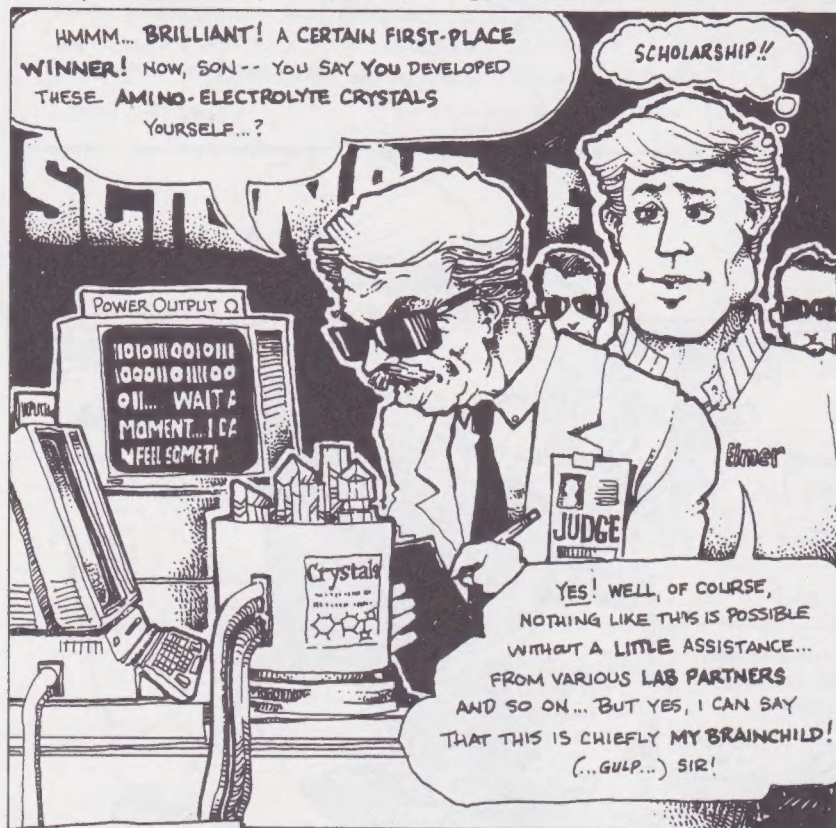
LET ME SHARE YOUR RIG,  
HUGO! MAYBE I'LL GET  
LUCKY AND CONTRACT  
SOMETHING **LETHAL!!**  
SHUFFLE SHUFFLE SMERK-K-K

MEXICAN  
BROWN  
SMACK

JUST SAY  
NO PROBLEM,  
DUDE!



MORT IS, UNDERSTANDABLY, A NO-SHOW AT THE SCIENCE FAIR.



SOME DAYS LATER...



SPECIAL AGENT FOUR ONE SEVEN HERE... THE, AH, UNPLEASANT SITUATION" IS RESOLVED. YES-- THE BOY GENIUS IS GOING AWAY FOR A NICE, LONG REST. OUT.



COMRADES!

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO  
RECEIVE A **LOOSE BUNCH** OF  
**XEROXED SHEETS** AND  
OTHER SHIT COVERED WITH  
OTHER WILLIAM NEFF  
COMIX, AND GET ON THE  
**MAILING LIST** FOR  
FUTURE COMIX, CARDS,  
AND ASSORTED OTHER  
BULLSHIT (INCLUDING POSSIBLY  
A T-SHIRT OFFER SOON),  
SEND FIVE DOLLARS  
(A ONE-TIME FEE) \*

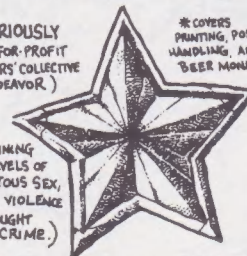
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NOT-FOR-PROFIT  
WORKERS' COLLECTIVE  
ENDEAVOR)

\* COVERS  
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HANDLING, AND  
BEER MONEY.

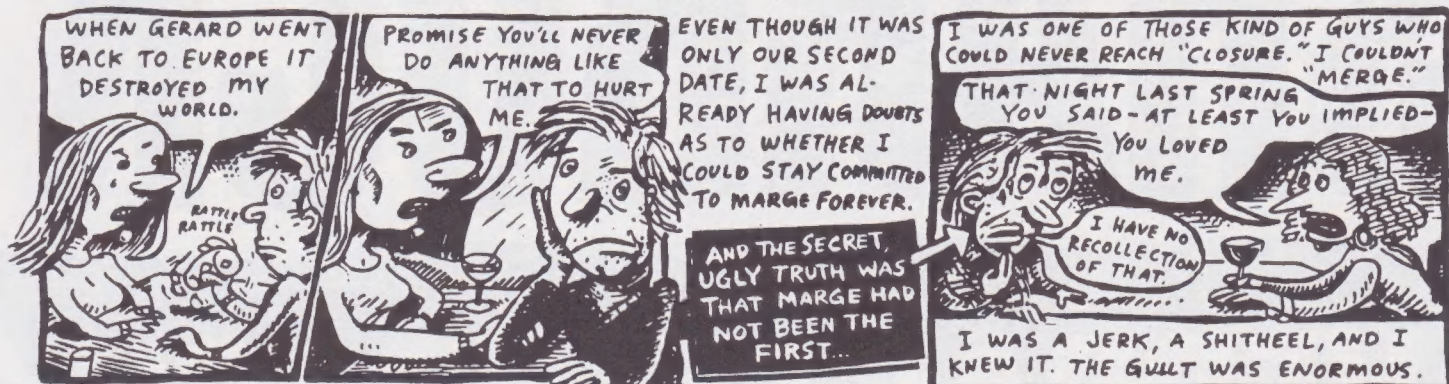
(CONTAINING  
HIGH LEVELS OF  
GRATUITOUS SEX,  
NUDITY, VIOLENCE  
AND THOUGHT  
CRIME.)





# TALES OF THE UNCOMMITTABLE

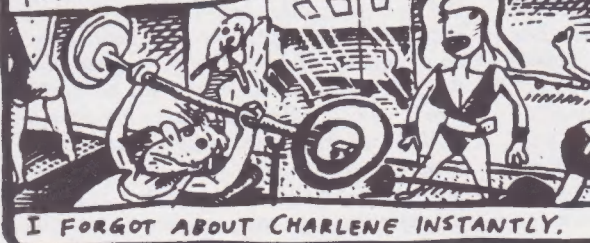
By Lloyd Dangle



THEN, CHARLENE CONVINCED ME THAT NOT BEING ABLE TO LOVE HER WAS A SIGN OF MENTAL ILLNESS...



I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT, BUT THERAPY TURNED OUT GREAT. SEX SURROGATES, TUB & JACUZZI, VITAMIN E, AND FREE SPERM POTENCY TESTS...



UNFORTUNATELY, THE COST WAS 4500 DOLLARS A SESSION. IN NO TIME I WAS DESTITUTE.



I STARTED SPENDING ALL MY TIME AT A BAR WITH A WAITRESS NAMED DOT. I BECAME OBSESSED WITH A CHILD ACTRESS ON A T.V. SITCOM.





# SONNY SHARROCK

## VERBAL FEEDBACK

BY MIKE "RUBIN" RUBIN

The name Warren, "Sonny" Sharrock may as yet be criminally unfamiliar to all but the most astute followers of really-fucked-up guitar noise, but his brand of unfettered 6-string mayhem is just too damn loud/vital to remain relatively anonymous for long. A veteran of the New York free jazz movement of the late '60s which included Albert Ayler, Cecil Taylor, and Archie Shepp, Sharrock worked with Pharoah Sanders on the seminal *Tauhid* LP (the early MC5 used to perform a piece based on the song "Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt" from that album, and Iggy Pop has listed it as one of the major influences on the Stooges), as well as with Miles Davis and honky

flutemeister Herbie Mann, though he is best known for his recent work with the jazz "supergroup" Last Exit. On three live records and one studio LP of jazz-cum-metal, metal-cum-jazz, Exit have exuded a sonic fuck-all yet to be equalled. Live at New York's Knitting Factory this past February, the quartet stirred up an appropriately apocalyptic din: saxophonist Peter Brotzmann squawking and bellowing like a garbage barge passing by on the East River, Ronald Shannon Jackson's drums galloping like the Charge of the Heavy Brigade, bassist Bill Laswell rumbling below like a tremor along a fault line, and Sharrock blending crystalline/crystal-meth harmonics with feedback mushroom clouds to achieve musical armageddon, the firmaments collapsing and folding unto themselves, heaven and earth meeting, and the seven

seals popping like guitar strings.

On his own, Sharrock released three albums of difficult-to-listen-to collaborations with his then-wife Linda, combining his guitar electroshock therapy with her shrieks/whoops of porno-loop ecstasy and fingernail-to-chalkboard intensity on *Black Woman* (1969), *Monkey-Pockie-Boo* (1970), and *Paradise* (1975). After a virtual musical disappearance from the end of the '70s to the mid '80s, the last three years have seen him re-emerge to release his two best solo efforts, the excellent *Guitar* and *Seize The Rainbow*. More than his earlier work, these LPs showcase his unique ability to freeze incredible beauty and utter brutality in consecutive notes, setting off swirling and snarling sparks of amplified aumgn and melding a kiss-you-on-the-cheek gleam with a club-you-in-





the-groin growl that has as much to do with previous definitions of "jazz" as the A-bomb had to do with definitions of "weapon."

When not raking muck with Exit, Sharrock spends his time leading his own group, the Sonny Sharrock Band (now minus the white "blues" singer who looked like a refugee from late '70s Santana and sounded worse), as well as making cameo appearances with outfits as various as Material, Machine Gun, and an upcoming jazz album by Bill Cosby (yes, the Fat Albert guy). We spoke with him at his home in Ossining, New York, down the road from Sing Sing Prison and 45 minutes up the Hudson by train.

■ **MOTORBOOTY:** *How'd you get started in music?*

■ **SHARROCK:** I started out singing what is now known as "doo-wop," back in the '50s. I started listening to jazz about 1958 and began liking it more and more. The first people I listened to were Dave Brubeck, Art Blakey, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and then I moved over into Miles Davis and started really listening to him and John Coltrane. In 1960 I started playing, when I was 20 years old. I never played rhythm-and-blues, I only sang it. When I started playing, I played only jazz. That was what I wanted to do.

■ **Did you ever play saxophone?**

■ No, I wanted to, but I had asthma so I

couldn't do that. It was probably a good thing, 'cause I was so much into Coltrane I would have tried very hard to get that thing. I'm still very much into him, but when it translates from what I hear him do, into my head and feeling, and out into my guitar, it's a completely different thing than it would have been on the tenor. I never copied licks, but I loved his playing so much it would have been, as they say, right up his ass.

I studied theory for a couple years. I wanted to play but I wasn't able to do it yet, so I thought maybe if I studied some theory I'd be able to get a handle on what I was trying to do. Guitar teachers were teaching absolutely nothing, they were



teaching you how to sound like Johnny Smith or one of those cats who were very popular at the time, and I wanted to sound like Coltrane. I wanted to find out how that was done, so I thought maybe the road would be to find out what he was doing theoretically, but that wasn't the key. Then I moved to New York and met Sun Ra, and I asked him if I could study with him, and he told me yeah, and I went down to his place, and the lesson was very brief and very strange. Actually, he showed me a couple of movies, and that was the end of the lesson. I hardly saw him at all.

#### ■ *Movies?*

■ Yeah, one movie was about his band his band in Chicago in the '40s and '50s, and they were all in white tuxedos and shit, when he was doing the big band thing, and the other movie he had gotten from the public library. I think it was *How to Make Statues Sing*. You know, typical Sun Ra fare — Saturday afternoon at Sun Ra's watching movies; what else would you watch?

So, that taught me absolutely nothing, but I was sitting there with Marshall Allen and Pat Patrick and all the cats from his band, and then Olatunji the African drummer called. Olatunji needed a guitar player for a gig the following week, and Pat Patrick said look, there's a guitar player right here, come on, so I got the gig. I was scared to death. I didn't know if I could cut it or not. So I went, and Olatunji's band was filled with Sun Ra's players, you know, Ronnie Boykins, Pat Patrick, Marshall Allen, they were in both bands at once because Sun Ra was making no money. I played that gig with them, and played another gig with them a few months later, and in that time I started to find ways to do what I was hearing. I was closer to the musicians, I was hanging out at Slug's every night. Slug's was the club for the new music here in New York back in '65. It was the club where *everybody* played. I mean if they weren't playing they were hanging out there. You'd walk in any night and there's Albert Ayler, and you'd stand there and you'd talk to Albert, and just by talking to him about the weather you'd learn something about music.

Later on I went down to Philadelphia to do some gigs with Byard Lancaster's band, and Pharoah Sanders came to the gig because he had been in Philly the night before with Coltrane. Now for me, Coltrane was God, God, will always be God, so I'm standing on stage playing, and I open my eyes, and I look and there's Coltrane smiling at me, and I hear this horrible noise behind me and it's Pharoah Sanders, coming up behind me, blowing his ass off. I mean, I had never heard a sound like this. He almost blew me off the stage. And I turned, and I started playing with him, and that was it. He asked me to join his band and do that beautiful music that he wrote, so that was it. I was on it. This was October, 1966.

We did *Tauhid* the next month.

#### ■ *Did you ever get to play with Coltrane?*

■ Very strangely once. He played flute one night. I was working with Pharoah Sanders and we were down at Slug's and I looked up and he was standing beside me playing the flute, and I said, whoa, *this is heavy*. It felt very funny. But I never played with him where he was playing full-out, I'm sorry to say.

#### ■ *At what point did you come upon the sound that you have?*

■ The buzzsaw, the rip. . . It was a combination of things. I was very much in love with Albert Ayler's sound, with Pharoah's sound, when Pharoah would do that high intensity sound, and of course with the playing of Coltrane and the melodicism of Miles. All of these things were affecting me, and there I was right in the midst of it. Now, I like to play along with records, it's a cheap way to play with very good bands. So one day I was playing along with this Miles record, *Miles in Europe*, and there's a version of "Milestones" on there that's extremely fast, and I'm playing along with it, and at that point I could play and make it for about 16 bars, and then it would start to fade, but I found that if I did a trill on one string, I was able to reach certain things, and then the sound developed out of that trill. That's when I started working on that, playing a repeated note very fast, like a buzzsaw, and to overpick the string. The lighter you pick, the faster you can go, but I pick very heavy. Try and make that fast, and you'll get a sound of pulling the string. You'll get two or three notes out of the one string at a time, because it's something about it slapping back or something that gives you more notes and you get these overtones, and it creates a harmonic that's kind of abrasive. It's an abrasive harmonic which is a strange concept in itself. I guess that's what it is. Some scientist will figure that shit out when I'm dead, but for now that's where we'll leave it.

So that's what happened. I heard it, and I said, *that* is the sound that Pharoah, and Coltrane when he's playing his harmonics, and Albert, that's the sound they're all getting, and that is the sound I want. That's why I think I'm a tenor player. I'm a real sick motherfucker about that, man. I really do think I'm a tenor player. I've never been very much in love with the guitar. There are guitarists that I really like, and I like all kinds of guitar, but I don't want to play like that. I hear something else. I hear tenor. I hear Albert. I hear Archie Shepp. I hear Bird. I hear Coltrane. There's something else that they do. There's another kind of sound in a saxophone.

#### ■ *Would you agree that the guitar has suffered more than any other instrument because of technique?*

■ Yes, and that's what you have to try to avoid. Because the saxophone is such a

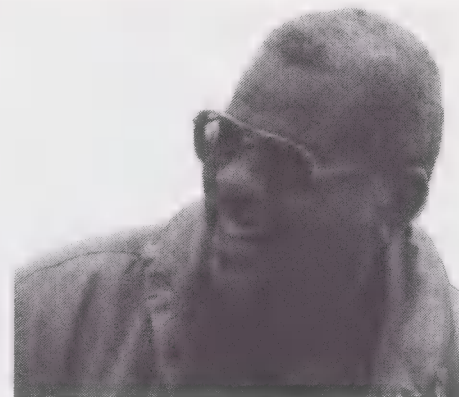


PHOTO: MIKE RUBIN

human instrument in that you put your actual breath into it and it comes out, no matter how much technique you build up, the sound still comes out of your insides, even if you are Anthony Braxton. But with the guitar, being that it's not coming from the inside, sometimes the humanity can get lost. Guitar players do tend to lean toward the technical side of the instrument. That's one reason I don't like it so much. Nowadays, with the help of the microchip, you can sound like anybody you want to sound like. Kids come in to the local music store looking for a particular sound: "Do you have the Pat Metheny box?" I mean, you can walk in and buy a box that's programmed to sound like your favorite star.

#### ■ *So how come there aren't kids all over buying a 'Sonny Sharrock box'?*

■ I'm so happy about that, man, I think it's because hopefully they won't be able to get my shit into a box. If I keep fucking up like I am I'm sure they won't! You know, I think there's something wrong with that. I mean, technology is very nice, and I use it myself — I love my full stack Marshall amp, but I do go directly into it without any doodads. The sound is in you or it's not there. I saw this Al DiMeola concert on TV and he was onstage and he got this horrible look on his face, and then his tech came out and started twirling dials and shit to develop the right sound. Something's wrong with that. It's like fucking somebody and somebody has to come and replace some components of your dick. Like, "Whoa, that's not right! She's not feeling this! We have to put in another chip!" just so you can fuck properly. It's the same thing. Think if you were eating food, man, and the food just came as a blob, and in order to taste the thing you had to put in a disk, a floppy disk turkey dinner. A little tiny floppy disk went under your tongue and that would give you turkey dinner. Everything that they put on your plate would look like mashed potatoes. That's what seems to be going on.

#### ■ *Do you consider yourself a "jazz" guitarist?*

■ I consider myself a jazz saxophonist with a very fucked-up horn.

#### ■ *But you don't consider yourself a "rock saxophonist"?*





PHOTO: RICK MCGINNIS

**A change for the better: Sharrock with his amp in the 80s (above) and with his wife Linda in the 70s (right)**

■ No, I never have been a rock player. I've been tagged with that, but I don't know anything about rock.

Being the way I am I've had the opportunity to learn a lot from everybody. At the time I came up, there was a strict line drawn between "rock" and "jazz" people, and a lot of hate on both sides. The rock people thought I was "too jazz," and the jazz people weren't too happy about me either. I was a little loud for them, so they used to say "Sharrock-rock" and things like that. But I was listening to rock, in respect to the energy that the rock players were getting, and the sound, the very abrasive sound that they were getting, and that was attractive to me. So I started using those elements, a combination of the Coltrane and the Ayler and the way the guitar was being approached by the rock cats.

■ *But the sound of your guitar, from the way it's so amplified and abrasive, has much more to do with what is thought of as*

*"rock" playing than it does with "jazz."*

■ That part does partially come from the rock end, you know, the volume levels, but like Miles said, Coltrane was the loudest horn player he ever heard in his life. Those guys played extremely loud, it's just that we're used to a different kind of volume now because of the electronic thing. But for acoustic instruments, those saxophone players back in the '60s were playing so loud people couldn't stand it. I saw Coltrane's band drive people out of Birdland one night, 'cause they sat at the front table and that shit just drove them right out. You know, I go out onstage, and my intention is to make the first four rows bleed from their ears.

■ *Do you consider Last Exit to be strictly jazz as well?*

■ No, Last Exit is something entirely different. Last Exit is truly an amalgamation of things, because everybody comes from a different background in that band. Everybody's got

a different idea of how it should be, and everybody's an equal partner. Peter Brotzmann comes from the tradition of the German avant-garde, not only in music but in painting, and I come out of the New York scene of the mid-to-late '60s, with Coltrane and Albert and those people being my gods, and Ronald Shannon Jackson comes out of Texas and the whole Fort Worth scene, you know, Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry and all those cats, and Laswell is from Detroit. Last Exit is a strange band. There's no way to put a finger on any one thing and say "this is Last Exit." It could be anything at any moment.

■ *What do you think of the stuff you did with Herbie Mann now? I've never heard it, but a friend described him once as just this sort of lightweight, whitebread flute player.*

■ No, Herbie gets rapped for that, and I don't know if that's quite fair. Herbie's a good player, and he's one of the best



bandleaders in the business. Seriously. He's a good cat. He's got real big musical ears. He can hear a lot of things that a lot of people can't hear. Like, he kept me in that band against the objections of all of the really big people and musicians who were telling him to get rid of me. I do believe that Herbie lost some gigs because I was in the band.

■ *So outside of New York, your guitar sound made you sort of an outcast?*

The first time I played London with Herbie, we did this festival. Sara Vaughn, Thelonius Monk's band, and Herbie Mann. Some of that Monk movie, *Straight No Chaser*, is from that gig. And at that gig, people in the audience were shouting, "Get him off! No! No!" In Switzerland, the first time I played at the Montreux festival, a man stormed the stage and went banging on the stage, "This is not jazz! This is not jazz!" You gotta realize that there wasn't even a rock press back then. There was no such thing as an alternative anything, there was just the mainstream of jazz. Coltrane was being lambasted all over jazz for doing what he was doing, and the younger cats like myself were catching hell too. And there I was, in the midst of pop-jazz with Herbie Mann, "Memphis Underground," and I'm doing all this crazy shit. So that really took a lot of heart for Herbie to keep me on the band through that.

■ *Have you ever heard some of the guitarists who're big at the Knitting Factory that seem to have been influenced by you, say, people like Bill Frisell and Arto Lindsay?*

■ What's to hear? What's to hear?

■ *Do you listen to much contemporary stuff, like by the other people you play at the Knitting Factory with?*

■ No. I don't listen to and never have really listened to my contemporaries. I never have. Even on those periods in the Lower East Side when we were all down there together learning, I never listened to anybody. I'm not very Catholic in my listening. I don't listen to everyone. I don't listen to younger cats, and I don't listen to contemporaries. My mind is so full of what I'm hearing that I really don't have time or space to listen to anybody else, except the masters, who can always teach me. When I'm listening to a cat who's no better than I am, I'm not learning shit. If I'm listening to the masters, I'm always learning.

I did this interview recently, and somebody asked me, "Did you see so-and-so, did you hear so-and-so?" and I said "Look, man, he has nothing for me." I saw Little Richard at the Apollo in the '50s. You don't get any more rock and roll than that. There's no way you can. That was the most astounding shit I have ever seen in my life. I saw Coltrane at Birdland. I saw Miles Davis at the Vanguard. I saw Duke Ellington. No put

down of anybody else, but when you've seen masters, there's very little that somebody else is going to show you.

Actually, I listen to a lot of music, but it's very selective listening. I listen to Coltrane every day. I listen to Charlie Parker every day. I listen to Miles every day. I listen to some '50s rhythm-and-blues every day. I only listen to what I like. That's a trick I learned a long time ago: if you listen to what you like you'll be healthier. The brain is a very weird instrument. It never forgets anything that it hears, and it stores everything. You may not be able to recall it at will, but it's there. So you should only listen to the shit that you like, because if you're listening to a lot of bad shit it'll come back on you in the middle of the night and you'll be helpless and powerless to shut that shit off.

I did some day gigs a few years ago and I was working with disturbed children in this school, and there was this one record by Carly Simon — I forget the name of the tune, one of her big hits, maybe "Anticipation" — and this girl used to love this song. To keep her calm, they used to play it; it was like an opiate for her. All day long they would play it. Sometimes now I'll be walking along and I'll catch myself whistling this song and say, "Aw shit!" Really, that's how it goes.

■ *I've read in different places people getting hung up on the terms "free jazz" versus "improvisation." Is there a difference in your mind?*

■ People make these differences in music. In American music, in all music that is made here in America, rock players improvise and jazz players improvise. There is a segment of players who call themselves "improvising musicians," and to my eyes they're heavily influenced by the European avant-garde and that all equates to boring bullshit. These cats who sit around and try to give a lot of weight to not-very-good solos. None of it means shit if it ain't good, whatever it is. If you're a rock player and you're playing something and the shit ain't happening, it just ain't happening, and there's no way in the world you can make it sound like something.

All of these different names for the music just make it easier for record stores to put your album in the back. It doesn't really mean anything. If the music is good, then it's good. Americans improvise in their music. Americans open music up, whatever they're doing, whether they're a pop singer or a jazz guitarist, they open the music up more than other people. American music is a unique thing.

■ *What about the term "fusion?"*

■ Somebody called me a "fusionaire," and I'm not quite sure what they meant by that. What they usually mean by "fusion" is that you have a pretty hefty contract with CBS, and that you play some kind of

electronic keyboard. For about five years you're about as hot as you can get, and then you're never heard from again. As music, I guess it would tend to mean really fast lines played by guitars and keyboards, with a lot of notes, a lot of sweet-picking arpeggios, and very little weight to the solos. Once you get past the heads, you listen to the solos, and that's where music is really decided for me. If the solos don't outweigh the heads of the tune, then not much has happened.

■ *Well, I wouldn't call Last Exit "fusion," but there's definitely rock and jazz going on at the same time.*

■ Right, there's a lot of things going on in there that have been brought together to make one sound. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes Exit can be boring. Anybody can be boring, man. I did a solo concert up in Maine a couple of weeks ago. No band, just me. And there were points in there where I just looked at the audience and tried to figure out why they were still sitting there. The shit was boring me, you know, so I know it had to be boring them. And that happens anytime I play. I get bored with what I'm doing. If it's not happening, I get bored, but with a band, I can stop playing and let someone else play. I guess the biggest sin that you can commit is to bore people.

Last Exit is a band that was formed with the idea that we shall never talk about what we're going to do, we shall never pre-plan anything, and that's how it's been. But when we did the *Iron Path* studio date, we were never all in the studio at the same time. Everybody came in and listened to what was happening and then played on top of it.

■ *What's in the future for Last Exit?*

■ Last Exit will go on until World War III, at least. I'm sure of it. There's no reason for Last Exit to break up: we only get together when it's comfortable for us. There's no responsibility. When I'm leading my own band, I have to think about a lot of different things, getting musicians to places and all of that, all those things that a bandleader has to think about, having the music presented right. With Last Exit, I walk on stage and I don't give a shit about anybody else. I don't have to think about anything, and we have a very good time. Then we all split and go our separate ways and we might not see each other again for a year. When the call comes, if everybody's available, we do it and it's fun.

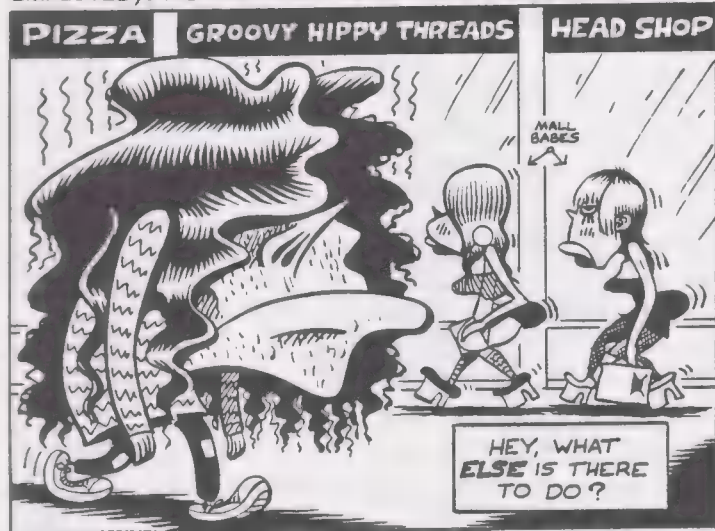
I don't even know the Last Exit songs by title, because we usually name the tunes in a bar when we're pretty smashed, and then we decide without the benefit of hearing them what names we'll just put on the record. We make a list and just put them on there.

Exit is forever. I think we knew that when we founded it. ■

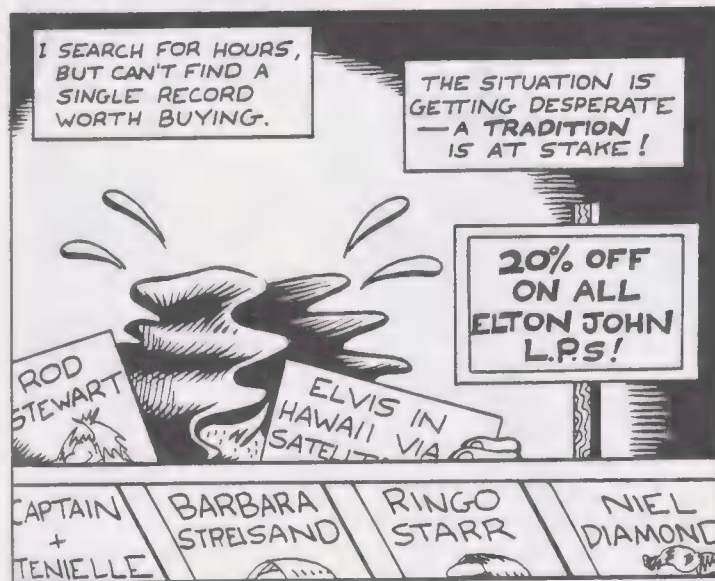
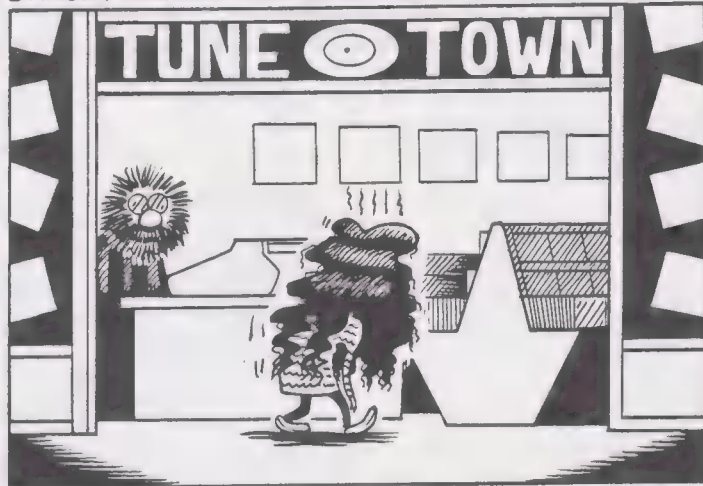


# LAME NEWS

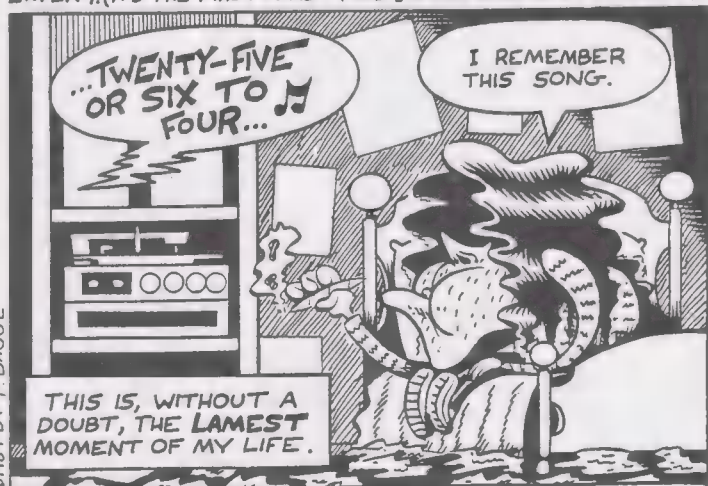
ONE DAY IN THE SUMMER OF 1976: BORED, RESTLESS AND UNEMPLOYED, I INSTINCTIVELY HEAD FOR THE LOCAL MALL.



I ENTER THE RECORD SHOP TO PURCHASE MY WEEKLY L.P., A LONGTIME TRADITION. THE PICKINGS HAVE BEEN GETTING MIGHTY SLIM LATELY, HOWEVER—"ROCK" HAD BEEN GOING STEADILY DOWNHILL EVER SINCE PETE HAM HUNG HIMSELF.



I GO HOME, PUT ON THE RECORD, AND LIGHT UP SOME BAD POT THAT A FRIEND GAVE ME, HOPING THAT IT WILL HELP ME "APPRECIATE" THE MUSIC TO THE FULLEST POSSIBLE EXTENT. (IT'S THE FIRST + LAST TIME I EVER SMOKE BY MYSELF.)



I LISTENED TO THE RECORD A FEW MORE TIMES BEFORE I FILED IT AWAY FOR GOOD, AND GAVE WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE POT TO MY BROTHER. THE NEXT DAY I APPLIED FOR A JOB AT READERS DIGEST, AND I WAS HIRED ON THE SPOT.

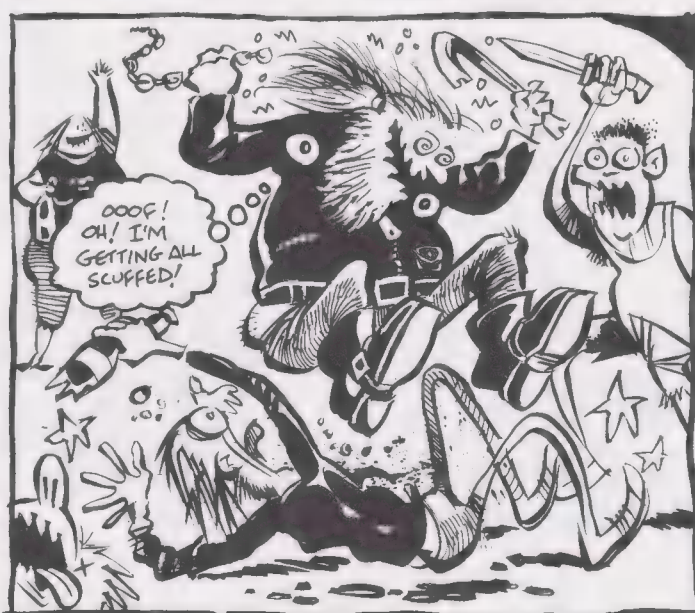
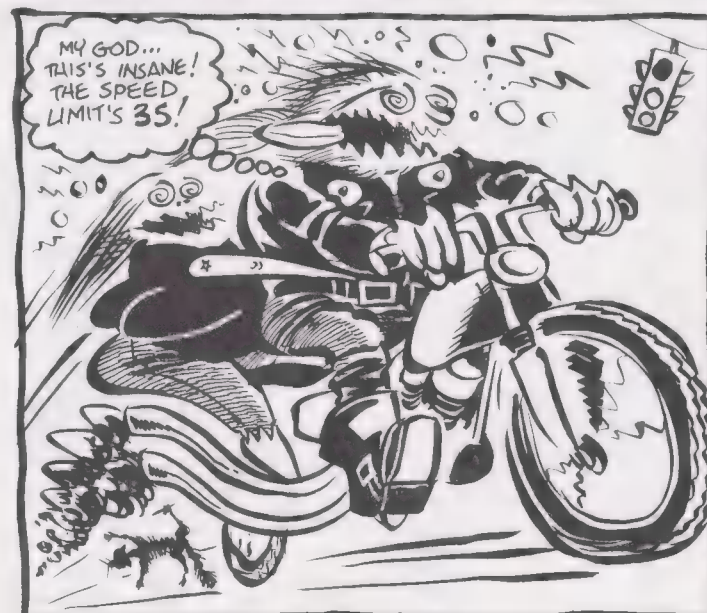
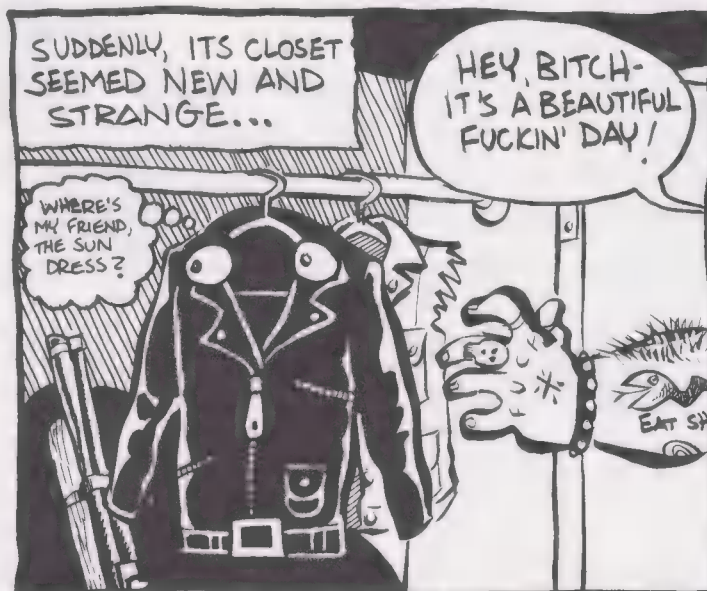
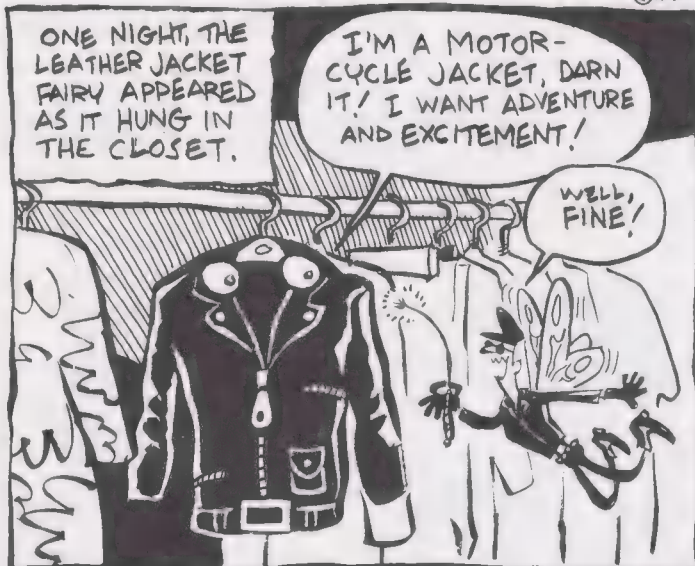
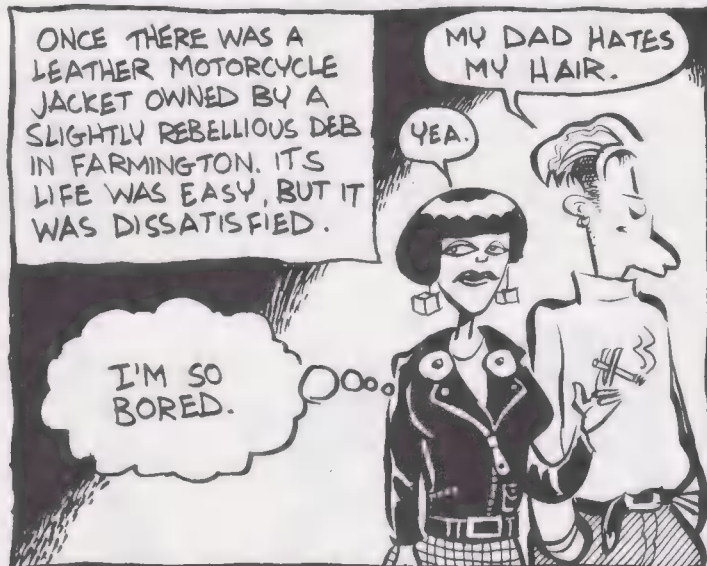




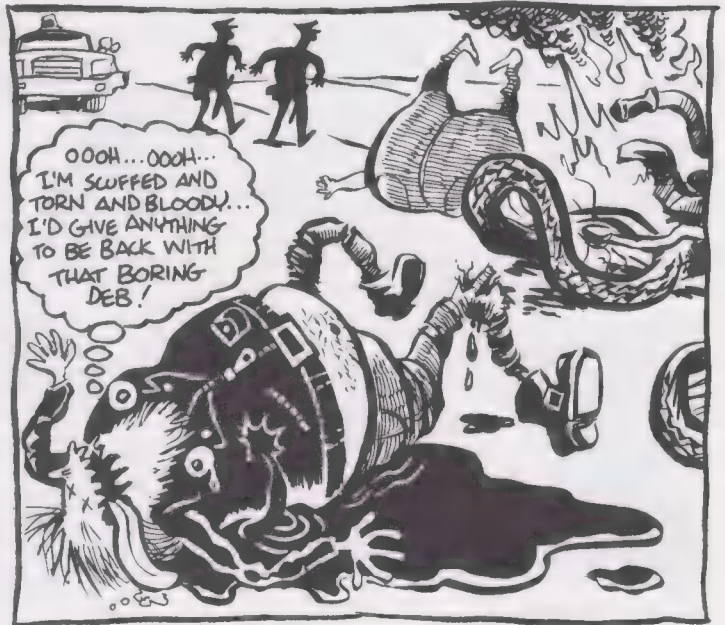
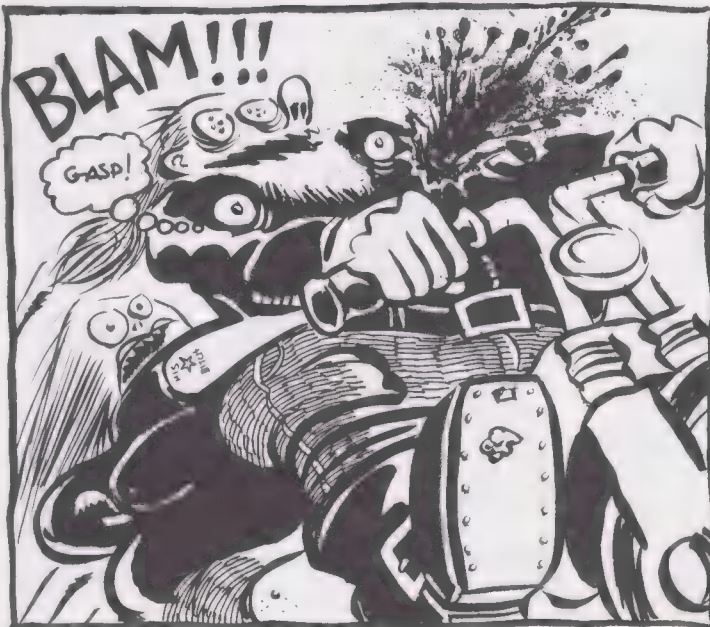
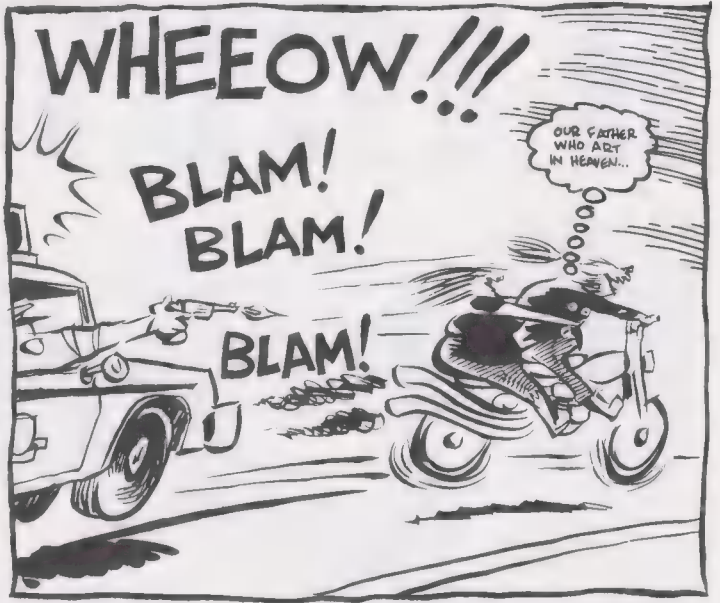
# THE LEATHER JACKET

A FAIRY TALE

by TERRY "FETISH FACE" LABAN  
©1990

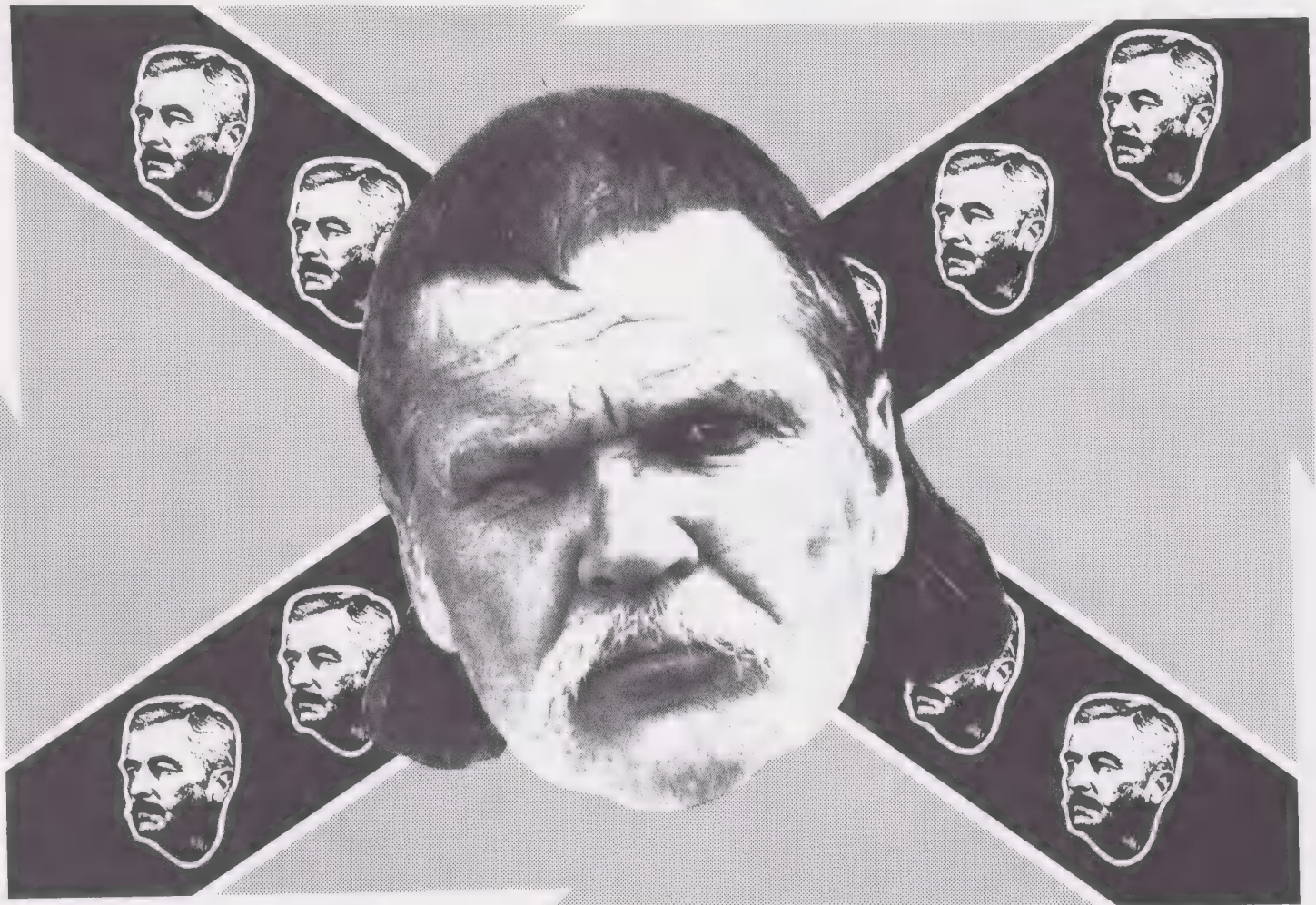








# HARRY CREWS



## pen-packin' old boy

**BY ROB MICHAELS**

Mr. Harry Crews is one of the grittiest, funniest, and most compassionate writers ever to emerge from the American South, and considering the competition, that's no mean feat. His roots extend deep into the mean and sweat-stained soil of the southern-Georgia dirt farm where he grew up in the wake of the Great Depression, ■ brutal season of "wonder years" stunningly chronicled in *A Childhood: The Autobiography of a Place*. After a brief stint in the U.S.M.C., ■ long string of wives, and a lengthy bout of hogback wanderlust, Crews hooked up with the University of

Florida, where he currently teaches English. Along the way, he's left a trail of some of the most side-splitting, tear-jerking, gut-wrenching pulp you'll ever read—mad and vital tales of Chevy-eating (*Car*), snake-sucking (*A Feast Of Snakes*), and bible/beaver-thumping (*The Gospel Singer*)heels/heros staring down their fates and leaving their own crazy stains on an alien and unforgiving world. Mr. Crews has also lent his steady and penetrating hand to non-fiction, making numerous appearances in the likes of *Playboy* and *Esquire*.

MOTORBOOTY spoke via telephone with this deadeye potentate of weatherbeaten wisdom and transcendental profanity.

(Apparently, an ill-advised group of people has formed a tribute band bearing the name of the subject of this article. Said ensemble has neither any bearing on this interview, nor by the looks of things, on anything else.)

■ **MOTORBOOTY:** So you've just published a new book?

■ **HARRY CREWS:** Yeah. It's called *Body*, and I could have gone to any number of places to get it published, but I ended up at Poseidon Press because they got me laid.

■ **Are your dealings with the publishing industry often a source of trouble?**



■ I'm not sure there are any generalities that one could make about the publishing world that'll hold up, except that most of the people involved are assholes. I've been treated pretty well, though. When you have a publisher, many times the only person you know there is the editor, and it's not so much that there's an adversarial situation between writers and editors, but the truth of the matter is this: a writer spends a year, year and a half or whatever it is writing a book and then some editor sits on the toilet for a weekend reading it and tells you what's wrong with it. You learn quickly that they might be right and they might be wrong. I *do* think a good editor is a good thing to have, but a good editor is nothing more than a good reader, someone simply saying I do believe this, I don't believe that; this is too fast, this transition doesn't work, etc. Editors, like agents, are a necessary evil. I never read a contract—I leave that up to my agent. I just make sure they promise me a lot of pussy whenever I come into town and sign on the dotted line.

■ *Have you written much non-fiction lately?*

■ Yes. A little while ago I found out that Sean Penn and Madonna are bibliophiles, both of 'em—not only do they buy and collect books, but they read 'em too. After they read *The Knockout Artist* they asked me to go to the Spinks-Tyson fight with them and I did, and later I wrote a piece on Madonna for a magazine. So yeah, I do some of it, but I started out to be a novelist and that's where my heart is so I do less and less non-fiction. I'm currently writing a screenplay for Sean Penn. He wants to stop acting and direct, which should make everyone happy. We got along real well off the bat. He treated me like blood kin and I'd trust him with life. I don't mind writing screenplays, but it's Sears-Roebuck catalog prose. It doesn't matter how it's written, just so you know what the camera's looking at. It turns me off—it reminds me of writing instructions on how to run a lawn mower.

■ *A lot of your books involve sports: football, boxing, karate....*

■ Well my new book is informed by the world of female body building. I trained a girl that won a bunch of titles—she could have won the world if she'd have wanted to get heavier than 124 lbs, but she wouldn't. The girls that win the world now do it at weights like 155 and they look good so long as they're in briefs and under posing lights and at a distance from ya, but put one of 'em in a dress and they don't look so.....well, it depends on the man. I admire them greatly but I've never been to bed with a 155 lb world-beating female body builder (or a male body builder for that matter) and I don't know what it would be like, but it seems like huggin' one of 'em would be like huggin' a guy. But I don't know, fuck it, I don't want to pass judgement on shit like that. You're right, I follow a number of sports, boxing more closely than anything else. And strangely enough I love track and field. I'd just as soon go to a goddamn track

meet as just about anything that I can think of going to. Shit, I can remember when the seven-foot high jump was an insuperable barrier. I can remember when the four-minute mile was an insuperable barrier. Let me tell you something about that shit. Everybody knows that Roger Bannister was the first guy to run a sub-four-minute mile, but almost nobody knows how long his record stood. His goddamn record stood seventeen fuckin' days, bud. All them years everybody said no one was going to run a sub-four-minute mile, but once one man showed that it was possible, a whole slew of guys came in and ran a sub-four-minute mile.

I can tell you in just a heartbeat what my fascination with sports is. It's this: I think all of us are looking for that which does not admit of bullshit. You can't get it in a marriage, you can't get it in a—*to use a word I hate—relationship*, you can't get it from the church or the government. The government for godsakes, don't get me started on that. Every government in the world is just a tissue of lies, and anybody who doesn't know that just hasn't thought about it very much. But if you tell me you've got 4.4 speed in the 40, hell, we'll just put a watch on you and see if you've got it or not. If you tell me you can bench press 450, hell, we'll load up the bar and put you under it. Either you can do it or you can't do it—you can't bullshit. Ultimately, sports are just about as close to what one could call the truth as it is possible to get in this world.

■ *Do you think writing cuts through bullshit in a similar way as sports?*

■ Well I think that, but I also think there's a connection in another way. If you wanna

find out what you're made of then you undertake to write a novel. In the popular mind, I think writers are thought as kind of panty-waisted, limp-wristed, semi-precious people. But it takes a brand of courage and a tolerance, a very high tolerance, for failure, frustration, and self-doubt, for running up into something that looks like it's totally impossible, and instead of turning around and abandoning it, you sit to it and say no, goddamn it, there's an answer in here somewhere, and I'm going to find it or fuckin' die. It requires a tolerance for self-doubt and anxiety that most people have no notion of. Most anyone can deal with that sort of thing for a day or two, maybe even a week or two, but try dealing with it for a year or two. You get up every morning and it's still there, right where you left it. I've never started a book in my life that I knew the ending of, I've never made an outline in my life. Robert Penn Warren said that a writer doesn't have to know the story he starts out to write, all he has to do is believe in his knowledge of craft and technique to discover the story. Discovery is what it's all about. If you already knew all the stuff you're writing about, there'd be no reason to write about it. Writing is a form of thinking and a form of finding out at some kind of gut, blood level what you think about a thing. All of the best fiction is all about the same thing. It's all about somebody doing the best he can with what he's got to do it with—that's all, that's all it is. It's all about good and evil and right and wrong. Writing is a terribly moral occupation practiced by not-necessarily-moral men and women. In fiction, somebody's ass is on the line, he's got to jump left or he's gotta jump right, he can't





stay where he is. And in the jumping, he's got to make certain ethical and moral decisions, and live with 'em.

As a rule, I always write about three hours a day, because the degree of concentration it takes to write and have it be any good is such that after three or four hours you feel like you've been beaten with a goddamn baseball bat. But that isn't always true. *Playboy* recently bought a chapter from my new novel, and it was written in a way that almost nothing that I write is ever written. I wrote the whole chapter in one sitting. I wrote much longer than I usually do, but I was so in love with what I was doing and it was working even though I didn't think I could make it work because it's a fuckin' love story, kind of a sub-story to the rest of

the novel. There's this world-beating male body builder, and among other things he's got the greatest back in the world, nobody's ever had a back like that. He falls in love with this young girl who would be pretty if she was about 150 pounds lighter. She's got good bone structure and all that but she's just a very fat girl. It's the first time they ever get down and get close. With her being as fat as she is, she hasn't had that many guys hit on her in her life, and all that shit's alien to her. It's nice. It's real sweet and it's pretty. I don't write that many sweet and pretty, tender things. I don't have anything against them, I've got something for them, but they rarely come to me. The odds are so overwhelming, statistically, against the thing that

happens between men and women that it's a wonder anyone ever gets married. But by God, when it works, fuckin' money or where you live and all that other shit don't mean shit, man—you've got somebody. They ain't your blood, but in one way they're more than your blood. Despite the fact that I haven't been married in eighteen years I still hold that shit in great awe.

■ *Your books also feature a lot of sideshow-attraction-type characters. Aside from the non-fiction piece Carny, there's obviously the very big-footed Foot in The Gospel Singer, Herman in Car, and even Eugene in The Knockout Artist.*

■ A lot of people like to call them freaks, which is a word I don't use. Very often you see the "normal" world better, more clearly, and in a light which you would not otherwise see it if you are seeing it through the perception of "abnormal" human beings. You and I can hide all manner of shit. If the word crazy means anything it just means that you can't do for yourself in the world, and that's when they lock you up. As long as you can put your clothes on and you can go to the grocery store and the laundry, it don't matter much what you do, nobody's going to fuck with you. But if you're three feet tall, every goddamn face you meet is a mirror that gives yourself back to you. If you're three feet tall and you go into a restaurant and you want a hamburger you've got to climb up on the stool to eat the goddamn thing. Well getting on a stool ain't nothing to you and me but if you're three feet tall it's a motherfucker. I often see people that are special in the consideration of God, they're all twisted and warped and in wheelchairs with motors and they've got two appendages on their one hand that they can sort of push buttons with. A great many things always occur to me. One, these people need to be hugged just as much as you or I do. They need to make that connection with another flesh. Also I want to look at 'em in such as to say "Hell, man, it ain't nothing, you got fucked up, it was the hand that was dealt you and you're dealing with it, fuck it, I'm with you." On the other hand it's difficult for me to look at them because the sympathy—or whatever you want to call what you feel about somebody getting hit with something like that—is bound to show on your fuckin' face. I remember living with a woman who was a sculptor, and a damn good one, and she had a show of all these big things that she'd made. A fuckin' blind boy came in and wanted me to tell him about what was there. Everybody else—hippy-dippy types standing around with long-stemmed glasses and shit—was treating him like it seems people always treat blind people. And then suddenly it occurred to me, I said wait a minute, fuck, man, give me your hand. And I started leading him around, putting his hands on the sculptures and telling him about what he was feeling. You could just see it all over him, he was grateful that

Roger Bannister, looking for "that which does not admit of bullshit."





somebody wasn't treating him like a goddamn leper.

■ *Do you think there's any connection between the performance aspect of a sideshow act and the act of writing—sort of exposing flaws, things that may cause shame?*

■ Well I never thought about it just that way but since you mention it, there probably is. One of the things I hate is when people get too precious about writing, make it too pristine, too elitist, too "you've got to have a certain kind of education or perception or elevated consciousness to understand it." That's horseshit. All of the great literature that I love, read, and re-read I find entertaining. Writing ought to entertain. But then I think if it only entertained it would be like



Madonna:  
Crews-ophile.



television sitcoms. As Flannery O'Connor said along these same lines, the best comedy allows you to see the skull behind the smile. I mean, smiles are fine, but there's a skull back there that of course reminds us of what we all know: we're all going to lie down and die and the worms are going to get our fucking eyes and it's not that one ought to be obsessed with that fact but you ought not to ignore it either.

■ *To what extent are your characters based on people you know?*

■ It's definitely "based on." I've always thought the imagination makes nothing out of whole cloth. I'm not prepared to make that a categorical statement, maybe it does, but if you're writing about a building, you're probably thinking about a building somewhere, even if it's unconsciously. Then it all gets modified and transformed into something else. I know writers are very fond of saying that they're not in their own books, "Don't look for me in my book, I'm not in here anywhere." Well they probably are not in there in full form. But their prejudices, their sentiments, their biases, their angle of vision on the world—to say that's not in the book is bullshit and they know it. It's impossible for it to be otherwise. What they're trying to say is "Don't confuse me on some kind of one-to-one basis with somebody inside the book." This is particularly true if they're writing a first-person novel. Readers are often inclined to confuse the voice, that "I," with the person that's writing it, but that's a

distinction that writers insist upon, and I think rightly so. I know I sure as hell do.

My whole life isn't writing. I might be shootin' pool, or out in the woods, or hunting or fishing. Certainly fishing. But writing is central in my life. I may only work on it two or three hours a day but I do it seven days a week. If I get those hours, it's kind of like an anchor to me in the world, and if you don't like "anchor" then it's kind of like a stabilizing influence on me. Particularly if I think I've written something that's not bad, that's half-ass good. Then it doesn't much matter what happens to me the rest of the day, it can't fuck with me.

The truth of the matter is that we've all got strong suits and weak suits and there's no such thing as a perfect piece of writing. There's going to be flaws in everything but some people are so goddamn strong in the things they do well that the flaws can be overlooked. Faulkner comes to mind. Shit, Faulkner could write some of the worst motherfuckin' metaphors that have ever been imagined in the history of letters, and when he just gets purple, when his prose gets out of hand, he's capable of turning a passage into rank, sophomoric bullshit. But he's so goddamn strong in so many other ways that it just doesn't matter. Obviously, Faulkner has been an influence on the whole world and I don't dare go near one of his books when I'm writing something. His voice is so goddamn overwhelming that I just don't.

■ *You've got to be at least sixty*

*now. What do you have to say about that?*

■ Well, there ain't a hell of a lot to be said for getting old. But I'm not as hard on myself. I've always run on a tight wire. I've got a nervous temperament and if I want to do something, I want to do it at least 100%, full bore, like if I can't have too much of something I don't want anything at all. But in recent years, that's gone away, or been modified. I rather like myself more than I did earlier. I've got a little more patience with myself and with my failings and flaws and the things that I can't do. And a little more patience with other people. There's no goddamn reason to totally go nuts because some poor sonofabitch is doing the best he can and his best just ain't worth a shit. There's no reason to beat on the motherfucker or get upset about it, but I used to do a lot of that. I backed off that pretty good and I'm glad about it.

■ *Those other people are probably pretty glad about it too.*

■ Oh yeah.

■ *Do you think that your change in temperament has shown in your writing, or maybe it's because of your writing?*

■ I don't know if it's shown in my writing, and it's not that I've made peace with my writing, with what I'm capable of doing. It's not as though I've said to myself, "Well, you're a pretty mediocre motherfucker," which I don't believe. Modesty's not my strong suit. I'm not a modest man. It's not that. It's just that for many years I would literally tear my guts out doing the very, very best that I could and then, on top of that, beat on myself because it wasn't better. Well fuck that, man. If you've already opened everything that you could get open, if you've given every fuckin' thing you've got, well then, if you're going to do anything, you ought to say to yourself, "Well, old son, it ain't Shakespeare and it ain't Dostoevsky but what the fuck, it ain't too bad for an old boy out of south Georgia." Have a little forgiveness for yourself. I've always been hard on other people, but harder on myself than I was on them. Nothing was ever good enough and nothing ever is good enough. I've never finished any fuckin' book, including the one that I just finished, where I didn't say, "Well, son, you blew it again." That's what led Graham Greene to say that the artist is doomed to live in an atmosphere of perpetual failure. Conception is pristine and pure and has all manner of hope in it, but between conception and execution, something gets lost. I'm sorry bud but don't let anybody shit you, there's a big gap there. There's always going to be a big gap there and you can drink yourself to death over it or you can shoot yourself in the head over it or you can be an asshole to your family about it. There's a lot of ways you can handle it, and everybody, every man and woman, comes to their peace with that however they do. I got no advice here, everybody works it out for him or herself. ■



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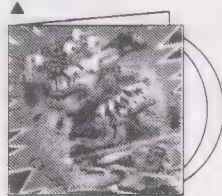
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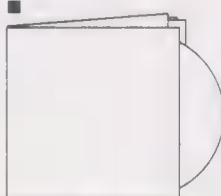


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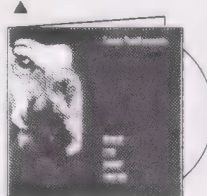
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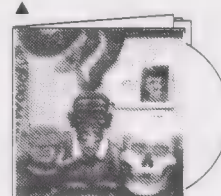
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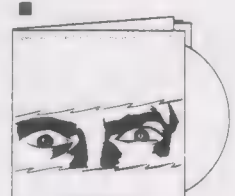
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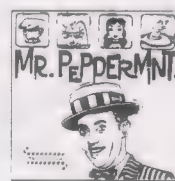
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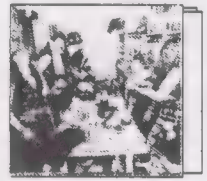
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# Eric: "I'll pick you up at seven!"



PHOTOS BY PHIL DÜRR

*What Gone In Sixty Seconds fan doesn't long to hear those words! A real date with Eric Oblander, that troublesome tow-headed troubadour from GISS, would be sheer heaven, and it might go just like this:*

**6:53 P.M.**

Your doorbell rings—Eric must be a little early! You peek downstairs, but it's just "Ronnie Retardo," the special ed. boy who scared you when you were little. Your father tells him there's going to be a thunderstorm so he'll run away.

**7:15 P.M.**

Still no Eric! While you're waiting, you put your lawn-blue colored copy of GISS's *So Far From Good, So Close To God* (recorded in the nude) on the turntable, and in no time that kick-pants beat (courtesy of ex-Seduce drummer Chuck Burns) has you shimmying around your room, lost in the sound of "rock music." Your friends often play "air guitar" along with Special K's *Hair Bear Bunch*-inspired leads, but you always lip-sync Eric's lyrics. Eric has the most perfect voice you've ever heard—so perfect that your mother sometimes sings and dances along! Her favorite is the Motorhead-colored "Nitro-Burning Funny Girl," while you prefer the Aerosmithian riffage of "Kick In The Head."

**11:10 P.M.**

Just when you're about to give up, the phone rings. It's him! He's calling from a pay phone and slurring his words just like your father did on New Year's Eve. Eric is in the mood to celebrate because he just lost his job! He tells you that those stupid off-the-farm police took away his driver's license, just because he sideswiped a few Christmas shoppers in the parking lot at Southwyck Mall, and asks you to borrow your parents' Cutlass Sierra. Even though you don't start driver's training 'til next semester, his voice is so confident and reassuring that you know it'll be a breeze to start driving tonight! Following Eric's advice, you quietly open the garage door and push the car out of the driveway and down the block before you start it, so as not to disturb your parents' slumber.

**12:00 Midnight**

It's tough getting used to those power

brakes and you stall a bunch of times, but in no time you arrive at the 7-11 that Eric phoned you from. A perfect gentleman, he offers to take the wheel and asks you to hold on to his beer (!) while he lights a cigarette with one hand, turns up a tape of KISS's *Destroyer* with the other and steers with his knee. Eric sure is a great driver—and fun too!



Your father never drives over soccer fields or meticulously-tended Japanese shrubs! Eric already has the night's entertainment all planned, too. "I'm up for sliders," he says, "How much money you got?"

**12:15 A.M.**

Denny's is open all night and also happens to be Eric's fave munching spot so you decide to stop there to eat. Eric orders a "Brawny Lad," a "Lanky Franky," a heaping bowl of Maumee gumbo, an assortment of meat pies and half of the breakfast menu, while you order a Diet Coke and fries. What an appetite! He finishes his meal before you even touch your fries! "You gonna finish those?" he says with a shy smile. "I hate the french but I love their fries!" As he licks your plate clean he makes you giggle by pointing at different people in the restaurant, pretending he knows their names, and making up little stories about them. "There's Photo Man Jr." he laughs, pointing to a black-garbed, rodent-like

individual who's squirming in his seat like he has to go to the bathroom. "Nobody likes that guy. He's got a tattoo of Tattoo from Fantasy Island, hair extensions for his sideburns, and he went to drug re-hab for *pot*! He borrowed somebody's van for a beer run and ended up living in it!" You can see why Eric is such a good lyricist—his wit is so spontaneous! On your way out, you're doubled over with laughter as Eric nonchalantly tosses the bill to the next table and flicks his lit cigarette at the head of a mohican'd dolt seated nearby. "Christ!" Eric mutters, "What fucking year does that guy think it is, anyway?"

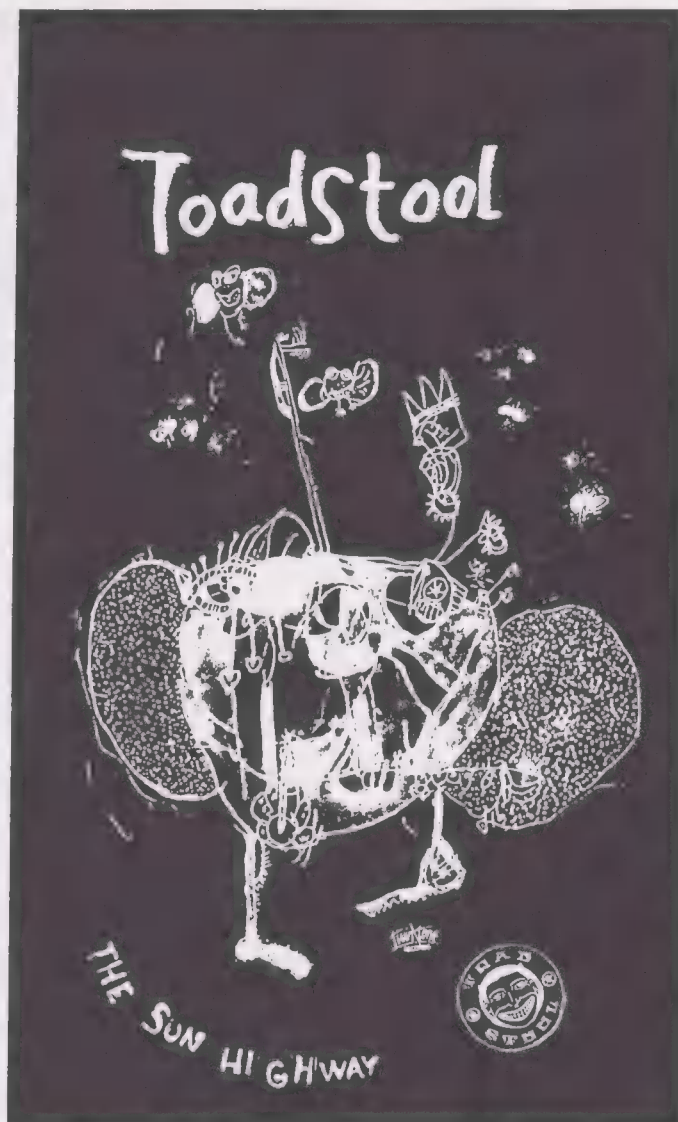
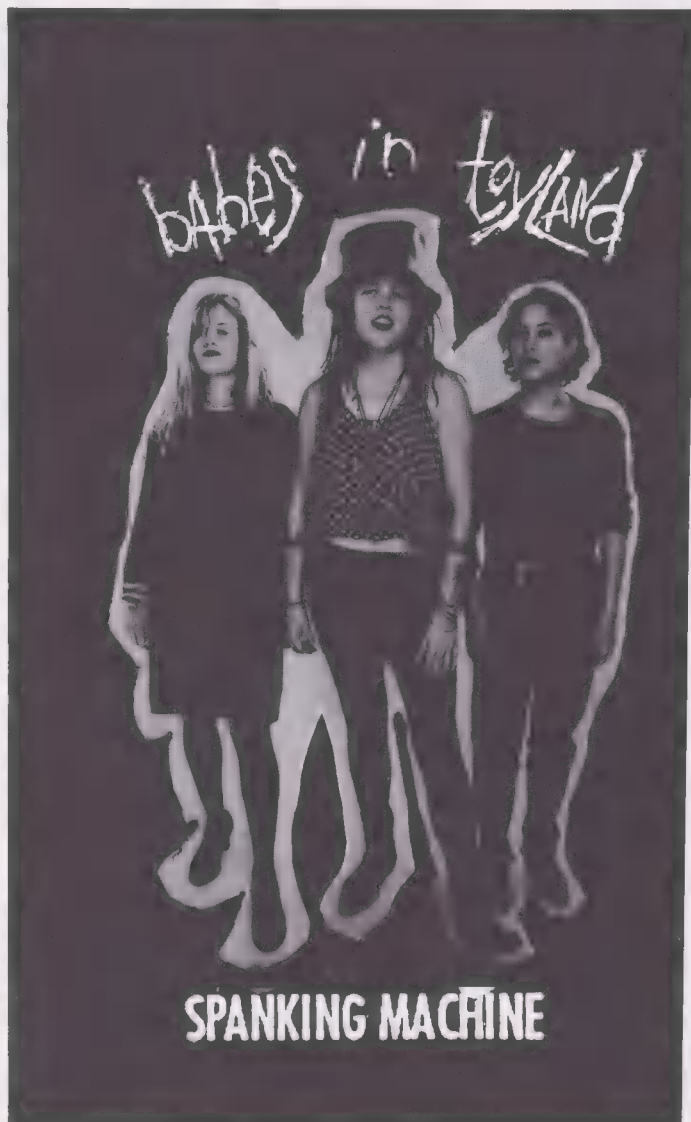
**1:20 A.M.**

"I'm all pumped up like a little Zeppelin," Eric announces as he discreetly cuts one and peels out of the parking lot. It's past your bedtime, but the evening's fun is just beginning because the car-lined street ahead can only mean one-thing. "Party!" Eric shouts over a tape of "AC/DC" by Sweet, "We're in the house!" When you arrive at the party you find that it's filled with stuck-up people from your school. Everyone recognizes Eric and gets out of his way, and the girls are all glaring enviously at you! Special K., Steve "House Me" Smith (the bass player) and rhythm guitarist Andy (who used to play with the not-nice Necros) are already there—they've picked up someone's Honda Civic and left it lying in the street, and now they're egging the inside of the house and prank-calling Perth, Australia. "Get any face?" Steve asks, leering good-naturedly at you as he elbows Eric in the ribs. You blush and Eric does a spit-take, inadvertently spraying beer all over the few remaining partiers. "I wish they'd just move away!" whines a drenched sissy on his way out.

**1:35 A.M.**

Your weeping father enters the party. "Where is my little girl?" he sobs, furious but helpless in the face of the collective girth of GISS. Everyone is laughing at him and you are so embarrassed that you could just die! But Eric is a true gentleman. "There, there, little man" he says, gently putting his arm around your quivering father. "Your daughter really has some Waylon Jennings, but she's still got her shirt on, so what's with the drama?" As your father whisks you out the door you turn just in time to see Eric wink and mouth those magic words: *I'll call you.....*





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# TAKE A SHOWER WITH JEFF

LIVE ACTION PHOTOS OF JEFFREY  
BY GALLADIN NAUBER



WRITTEN BY ROB MICHAELS  
INTERVIEW BY MIKE DANNER

Save for the occasional shot in the arm from Willie Tyler and Lester (or maybe the Manson chicks gone Kojak), that inscrutable quasi-theatrical mishmash called performance art has been in the sorriest of inspirational slumps ever since that Buddhist monk lit up the streets of Saigon some 25 years ago. What could've become an unfettered forum for catastrophic feats of mind/body fusion has instead grown into the perhaps the nastiest bastion of "Sprockets"-istic carrot-waxing in all God's creation. On one hand, it's the "artists," nothing but a bunch of stilted old mimes in clever new bottles and oversized suits, touching each other's monkeys and spouting gibberific po-mo profundities as if the world needed a vaudeville Baudrillard any more than grandpa needs a boil on his ass. On the other hand, it's the "sickos," finger-flipping bozos of the "Look ma, I'm naked AND I'm bleeding" school, pimp-walking along an "edge" that really hasn't moved for

about 20 years and lobbying for a plug in *RelSearch* harder than the guys in Dr. Hook wanted to make the cover of the *Rolling Stone*. (Word up, Karen Finley: it's not like showgirls in Bangkok and Tijuana haven't been stuffin' their clams fulla produce for the last 100 years in exchange for little more than a few plug nickels and an occasional kick in the teeth.)

But buck up, beefy eyes, cause someone has finally ridden in to save the day. No, Flavor Flav hasn't announced a clothes-optional solo tour (just keep praying for that one). We're talking about Jeffrey, the Teena Marie of performance art: one part limburger, two parts balls, and three parts unbridled emotional mariah. A dancer/ singer/ composer/ musician/ lip-sync artist who outshines any in the Monongahela River valley, or for that matter, the rest of the world.

Unlike his above-maligned competitors, Jeff isn't out to prove how smart, hip or tough he is—he's only out to express himself and to share that expression with his ever-widening audience. There's no need for self-

aggrandizing nods to boneheaded froggie theorists or big-housed, short-eyed scum (as if J.W. Gacy's roadside clown pics oughta save him from the king-sized lethal hypo he so richly deserves)—Jeff's own experience as a very single white male janitor in Indiana, PA provides a rich and ample frame of reference for his work. And unlike those who brandish their sexuality as a badge of rebellion, reducing their most sacred booty-centric desires to the stuff of a grisly sideshow (like the world needs a death-tripping Ron Jeremy any more than grandma needs to relive menopause), Jeffrey exudes a Venusian, let-your-hair-hang-down eroticism that is as playful and natural as the artist himself.

So in a Povich-like quest to get the inside scoop on the growing Jeffrey phenomenon (the list of recent Jeffrey converts includes Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth, Lydia Lunch, and the guy who can stop a rotary fan with his tongue) MOTORBOOTY spent over two hours on the horn with the man himself, doing all we could to immerse ourselves, Ganges-style, in the purifying geyser of Jeffdom.

## I GOTTA BE ME

I enjoy my music very much and I write it and play it at home because I enjoy it. It comes from very deep within but I don't want it to just stop at my living room; that's why I make tapes. The music I make reflects the theology and values of Jeffrey. I would just call it Jeffrey music. It doesn't have any specific style. It has elements of jazz, movie theme music, and ballads, but the vocals are strictly Jeffrey—very unusual, very avant-garde. Every few months I publish *Jeffery*, which is the Journal of Jeffrey Music. It lets people know what's tops on the Jeffrey "Top 40," and keeps them up on new developments, such as when I added rap songs like "Jeff Be Rappin" to my repertoire. I sell my tapes through mail order (*Bring On The Jeffery* and *Hey, It's Jeff* are big favorites) and I also sell off the little towels that I use to wipe my sweat off after shows.

## SHINGA, BABY, SHINGA

Some of my main dancing influences were different strippers and go-go girls. When I was going to printing school in Philadelphia some of the guys would ask me to go to the bar. I was under 21 at the time and they'd have to sneak me in to see the go-go dancers. They weren't nude but occasionally they'd slip a peek of their breasts as they danced to the popular music of the day, which was like 1973. I'd also go to the Trap Door burlesque theater when I was old enough to get in. I went three times to see the strippers and that influenced me, because even though their moves were kind of pretentious and a little overdone they had a certain comedy to them, even though they weren't trying to be comical. I like to mimic things like that and exaggerate them. I liked their moves and their energy and that's what inspired my dancing, not the sexual part so much.

When pressed, I guess I would agree that there is some sexual aspect to my dancing,



but that's because I feel freer around a coffee house-type of crowd and I can just be me. It's still mimicry but I feel sex is a part of life too, and given the rhythms of the music it's pretty hard not to bump and grind, you know. But I still wouldn't say that it's a sexual turn-on when I dance, just an emotional one.

I'd say my favorite dancer would have to be the fella who danced in that movie *Fame*. I think his name is Leroy and that's where I got the idea of slapping my rear end, because he did something similar in the movie.

#### "I THREW GUMBY OUT THE WINDOW!"

When I was eight years old I listened to a Top 40 station in Philly and when I would come home from school I would turn on my radio and listen to it. I enjoyed stuff like the Orlons, very good music then. Nothing like Top 40 today, which isn't very real or believable music. As a teenager, I was mostly into soul music and funk, people like Barb Mason, Doris Duke, and a group called the Politicians who were a psychedelic funk group sort of like Funkadelic. I dislike a lot of the Top 40 music that they're playing today. I think it's terrible. *I dislike Tone-Loc*. I liked Madonna's older stuff from '83 but now I think she's sounding very bland and commercial, and I don't like her dancing. It's too suggestive. I think that Paula Abdul's stuff is very weak and watered-down and doesn't have any spirit or funk to it. It's all drum machines and doesn't sound real. I mean drum machines are alright but there's a time to start using real drums again. I don't care for her dancing. I think it's openly suggestive in an exploitative way. I think it would be okay if she was just having fun or being comical but otherwise it just doesn't seem to be in good taste. I'm upset that a lot of newer soul music has sold out and that Aretha Franklin and Tina Turner have watered down their music into pop. I mean, it's a bit early for Anita Baker imitations, don't you think?

#### MAKING THE SCENE

I began by doing telethons in Indiana. I volunteered for a Big Brothers/Big Sisters telethon in 1979. At the time, all I did was dance, no singing, and I danced to a Latin song and "Respect" by Aretha. I wasn't prepared for the fanfare that followed. That night, the phones lit up and the viewers wanted me back on. I wasn't aware that I was gifted that way. Then, some time later, I think it was December 1987, I did a telethon from Indiana Mall. That set drew a lot of attention even though I still didn't sing; I was too scared to go forward that way at a shopping mall so I just did strictly dancing. But in the December 1988 telethon at Regency Mall I sang the song "Red Motor Bike" to a tape of an instrumental tune. It went very well. People in the Montgomery Wards remember seeing me on the televisions there. There were also lip-sync contests at the malls. The last one I entered was in September 1989. I picked a song called "Swami" off of a compact disc called *Pebbles*, a compilation of obscure, psychedelic '60s garage bands. They told me that I should

stick with something more acceptable or the people might not even clap for me, but then I decided to go with what was in my heart, what was right for me.

#### HAVE YOU EVER BEEN EXPERIENCED?

I tried marijuana a long time ago out of curiosity in the late '70s. I never inhaled it properly, the certain way you're supposed to hold it in, although I must have got a little in because I felt kind of giddy, a little high. But I don't think I did it right. Growing up as a teenager all I ever heard about was how great it was, what a great high it was, but at the time I didn't want to bother with it. I didn't think drugs were right.



Jeffrey tries

I have never taken LSD but I have done Allarest. It's an over-the-counter antihistamine that turns you into a vegetable. I never did it extensively, only when I had nasal congestion. Except for once. I was unemployed at the time and I figured a nice buzz would be good for the afternoon. I still use it when I have congestion and it does give me relief. Now they make a "no-drowsiness" formula but if I'm going to pay for medicine I might as well get a side effect to go along with it.

#### CRUEL STORY OF YOUTH

When I was younger I was very much turned off by religion. I had to go to Sunday School and I dreaded it. The kids were very cruel and they picked on me. I think it was just because I was different and they were very mainstream kids. I had a unique personality, I stood out. I didn't like baseball and the other things that kids were expected to like. At the time, I liked Archie comic books, going to animal movies, collecting bottle caps, and making Sony reel-to-reel tape recordings of my relatives when I visited Indiana. Although it was mostly recordings of talking, some of my relatives would sing. They'd sing some old songs, especially my aunts. Actually, my aunts were very into entertaining me. Maybe that's where I got this talent from—maybe it's in my blood, inherited.

#### BUST A PRAYER

One time a friend of mine convinced me to accompany him to a prayer meeting at the Pentecostal Church. I thought it would be the same as the Catholic prayer meetings with people sitting around in a circle with someone playing the guitar, but one Friday night I walked in and I heard a saxophone going with drums and a banjo, and it was totally unexpected. I was overwhelmed. I thought I'd just hear folk music but it sounded more like a nightclub band. So I started going to the services at the Pentecostal Church and I was getting closer to God, mostly by moving my body and getting down with the music. But I still didn't accept Jesus as my personal savior because I was raised Jewish and I figured if He was really the Messiah, then why didn't the Jews believe in him? I couldn't believe in something that wasn't really true, I had to be sure. But I kept getting closer to God and knew that God was real and that He could give me answers. Then, around April, 1976, a pragmatic move led me to accept Christ as my savior: instead of waiting for an unknown Messiah to come along, I thought why not enjoy the one that was already here? It was really just pragmatism. I asked Jesus to forgive me for every sin I could think of. I didn't have the correct teaching, all I had to do was just place my trust in him. It wasn't hard.

What were those sins? Well, when I was a little boy and went to summer camp me and the kids in the carpool used to pick on this other boy. There was also one girl we all used to pick on. I think it was because we asked them to sing a song and they wouldn't or they did it reluctantly, so I said "Let's pick on them, they wouldn't sing when we asked them to." So yes, I initiated it and I'm very ashamed of that. It's one of the worst sins I've committed. It wasn't right for me to pick on him. I guess I felt they were being kind of stand-offish by not wanting to sing. Maybe that's why I was picked on so bad later—you reap what you sow.

#### IT'S A NEW WORLD OF REFRESHMENT

The reason I've written so many songs about showers ("Take A Shower With Jeff," "Showerhead," "Soul Shower," "Won't You Come Into The Shower With Me," "I Found A Girl In My Shower Stall," "Don't You Want To Shower With Jeff," "Won't You Come Into The Shower With Me," and "Gumby's In The Shower Stall," to name but a few—ed) is that I had a shower installed in my living room, and that's what I see whenever I sit down at my keyboards to make Jeffrey music. These songs use that very sensual, cleansing shower imagery to lure people in, because they think they're going to be songs about sex. But I don't go any further. I only sing about hugs and kisses. Someday I'd like to make a shower video, featuring simply me and my shower. ■

JEFFERY  
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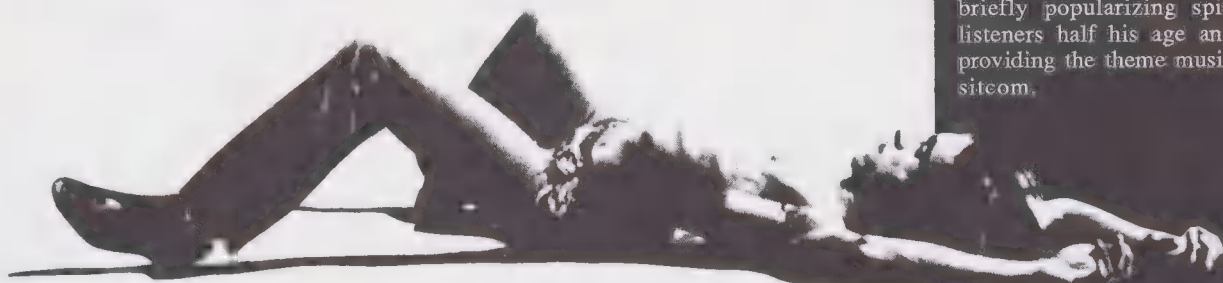


# HEROES, HOMEBOYS, HASBEENS: SECRET HISTORY

OF







December 1981. The Rolling Stones Interminable American Tour hits the Pontiac Silverdome, Pontiac, Michigan. After opening act Iggy Pop, né Iggy Stouge from nearby Ypsilanti, MI, is savagely booed off stage after only two-and-a-half songs, Master of Ceremonies/Head of Clean-Up Committee Bobo Brazil takes the microphone and begins reading off a list of items thrown onstage during Mr. Pop's abbreviated and fishnet-stockinged performance: 24 empty bottles of Boone's Farm Apple Wine, 36 unbreakable pocket combs, 62 pairs of men and women's underpants, 4 pairs of Sans-a-belt® slacks, 3 tire irons, 21 aluminum folding chairs, 34 automobile hubcaps (26 from General Motors cars), assorted coins amounting to \$73.18, various fragments of an estimated 250 hot dogs, 1 rainbow afro wig, 1 bowling ball, 2 dummy grenades, 186 bottles of Faygo Red Pop...

More than any other image, the symbol of Iggy Pop being ejected from the stage by his hometown audience at his largest-ever show sums up the schizophrenic state of Michigan music in a nutshell. The idea of showering the figure most responsible (along with Berry Gordy, of course) for putting the area on the regional rock and roll map with garbage instead of accolades might seem more than a tad bit preposterous, but such an action is only in keeping with the bizarre set of paradoxes and hypocrisies that comprise and define that sociocultural entity called Detroit. Why not bombard the foremost progenitor of the post-Motown, post-apocalyptic hard rock sound with assorted household trash and suburban refuse? Certainly it makes as much sense as the local entertainment media spending scads of time, dirt, and money crowing about its storied musical heritage yet remaining steadfastly amnesiac about the actual identity of those ancestors, or the aging, expanding, local late '60s warriors revelling in the supposed "glory" of the amplified accomplishments of their

youth, despite the anonymity and marginality of their existence, then and now. Why not peg the Ig in the noggin with a handful of pocket change; *who the hell is he anyway?* After all the hoopla and hyperbole, all the adjectives and ad campaigns, all the malapropian comparisons and malicious reappropriations, the burning question at hand still remains: exactly what is "Detroit rock and roll?," and more to the point, does it still or did it ever exist?

To begin an examination of the secret history of Detroit rock and roll one must first look briefly at the city itself, since the music produced in the Motor City from the end of the '60s to the early '70s is, more than the music of almost any other area, tied intrinsically to the collective ethos of its host. Stubborn, tough, butt-ugly and sometimes violent, the nation's sixth largest city has from the mid-60s onward been predominantly black while the surrounding suburbs are overwhelmingly white, suggesting a powdered-doughnut-and-hole that, while not entirely correct, is a not-far-fetched metaphor for the Detroit shakedown/Motor City breakdown of the area's economic investment. Via the tentacular expressways the wealthy and upper-middle class took their homes and businesses and fled, leaving behind bisected working class neighborhoods and the shell of the once-thriving auto industry. Despite some progressive exceptions, no one would confuse Detroit for a cosmopolitan bohemia; simply put, it's a factory town, geared (pardon the pun) around (and primarily responsible for) the American obsession with the car, loyal to the union, decidedly Midwestern in its point of view, and for the most part, satisfied with the little cultural expression provided. It isn't heaven on Earth, but at the same time, it ain't hell.

The image of Detroit that reaches the living rooms and T.V. eyes across America, however, is not that of a wounded

■ 1949: Transplanted Detroiter John Lee Hooker records "Motor City Is Burning," a prime piece of pre-NWA street-beat reportage re: the 1943 Detroit riot.

■ 1955: In the September of his career, Detroit-born Bill Haley finally scores a hit with "Rock Around The Clock," briefly popularizing spit curls among listeners half his age and inadvertently providing the theme music for a bad 70s sitcom.

■ 1964: Young Bob Seger lands a job at the Ford Motor Plant in Ypsilanti, MI. One long week later, Seger drops a Thunderbird carburetor assembly smack on his foot and never returns to the plant again. Upon losing a protracted workman's comp suit, Seger decides to make the best of his brief experience by mythologizing it in countless overwrought odes to "Life on the line."

■ 8/65: A promising career is cut short when Steve Pawlukiewicz of Ann Arbor's original garage greats the Cogs is killed on a booby-trapped toilet in Vietnam. Four years later a thinly-veiled version of their show-stopping theme song "I'm Gonna Be Your Cog," resurfaces in the repertoire of a better-remembered local group.

■ 10/65: The Rationals' "Gave My Love"/"Feelin' Lost" released on Jeep Holland's A-Square label. Although he's a nice guy, uncoordinated Rationals drummer "Moose" Meese is unable to play more than one drum in his kit at a time, so Iguanas percussionist Jim Osterberg is drafted to handle bass drum duties, his first-ever recorded appearance.

■ 7/67: Trapped on the Wayne State campus as riots rage through the city,





# BOB

paper revolutionary John Sinclair fears that his dream to become the first hippie president may end in with his premature death. Slapping on a dollop of shoe polish to fashion a crude Aretha Franklin disguise, the minstrelized Sinclair flees on foot to Ann Arbor.

■ 10/67: While ersatz bluesmen Cream plod through a show at the Grande Ballroom, guitarist Fred Smith of more-popular opening act the MC5 gives Cream bassist Jack Bruce a less-than-favorable mid-set critique, so incensing the sanctimonious Englishman that he stops playing immediately and gives up sex altogether.

■ 5/68: Beach Boy Dennis Wilson, eco-pimp Charles "Chazz" Manson (a.k.a. Jesus Christ, a.k.a. the God of Fuck, a.k.a. Buddha Sattva) and a few of his prizest hubba-hubba concubinettes (which at the time included Heart-throb "Dreamboat Annie" Wilson) roll through Motortown promoting the Beach Boys' cover of Chuck's "Cease to Resist" (formerly "Cease to Exist"). After washing down some hash croissants with a few glasses of Mr. Naturalized Hawaiian punch, the easy-going crew joins the MC5 onstage at the Edgewater Park band shell for a spirited rendition of I Wanna Be Your Dog, initiating the unfortunate trend of celebrity jamming on said tune. Back at the White Panther house, the

*The MC5's Rob Tyner, owner of the most prosperous caucused afro since Bernie of "Room 222," on the subject of Mao vs. meal money:*

We weren't hippies—no fuckin' way! Hippies didn't work for a living and we were a working rock and roll band. We worked our asses off! We had constant problems with everybody—the police, the competition, the press—and the politics of the situation eventually got so crazy that we couldn't even get to the music anymore. Something horrible was always happening, like one time in Benton Harbor they passed an ordinance that basically said that long-haired rock and roll bands from Detroit couldn't make lewd and lascivious below-the-equator movements onstage and get the girls going nuts, so we weren't allowed to move onstage. We had to sit in folding chairs like idiots, doing songs like "I Want You Right Now." It was pretty ridiculous, but there was nothing we could do! Finally I got so frustrated that I just took my chair and smashed it, and then we went ahead and finished the show. They didn't arrest us that time, anyway. A lot of times promoters would try to take advantage of us, they'd write a clause into the contract stating that if we said any dirty words at all onstage they wouldn't have to pay us. A couple of times we'd play these shows in the middle of the state where they knew that in order to come off as being real to the crowd we would have to say "Motherfucker," but then they wouldn't have to pay us! Then we started finding ways to get around it. We'd play a Catholic high school and say "Kick out the jams, Mother Superior!"

There was a big split between us and the revolution people and Sinclair, 'cause Sinclair's politics were just out to lunch. He had so many self-inflicted problems with the law, and it just got so expensive and so crazy that we either had to dump him or go under. The revolution people always said that we were supposed to be living a communal/socialist/communist thing, but we never believed in that because we had to do the work. We were the people out there getting our heads busted onstage, and it wasn't really a political thing for us. It was more of a job. Then we had to talk about all this bullshit rhetoric communist politics and we've seen what's happened to communism. It just doesn't work, lets face it. It ain't ever gonna work.

There was always this thing about romantic adventurism. The brave fighter for truth and justice against the evil machine and all that shit, standing up and waving Mao's red book, spouting all this fucking rhetoric, taking on the stance of this great big hero, when actually the guy's a college student. When the shit came down the regular people would get their asses beat this guy would turn around and say, "This is good because the people are being educated to the political situation." That's insane! We played at the Belle Isle Love-In riot and the '68 riots in Chicago and I saw what happens when you get into it with the cops. People weren't being educated, they were getting their heads beat in! I couldn't see the sense to it. And when the cops started beating people, the romantic adventurers somehow weren't there anymore. I think that, politically speaking, all of that revolutionary jazz from the old days was mostly bullshit. Sinclair was running the publicity machine at that time and he was trying to look macho to all the others in the underground movement. I'm not trying to discredit the ideals of it, the ideals of it are one thing but the reality of it is another. Okay, so we lived in a commune where everything was supposed to be equally shared by everybody. The band was out on the road kicking ass to make money to support the lifestyle of these hippies. Then you'd come home, and some bare-breasted broad would walk in with the red book spouting Mao's rhetoric, telling you how you should not be so materialistic, and give up the money. Well that didn't last too long, to tell you the truth. We did the work and didn't see the benefits from it. Our money was mis-managed and mis-spent and the management philosophy was just around the bend.

*Mr. Michael Davis, bassist in the band that led a fervent campaign against underwear and pioneered that inter-gender salute, the "titshake," on the subject of "revolution":*

We were the White Panthers! We admired the Black Panthers for their stance. Like them we set up a ten-point program, but it was conceived with a sense of humor. They were out there marching in platoons, they were practicing for something. We were sitting around the dining room table getting really high, and just cracking up. It



*From Solution to problem:  
Tyner, 1990*



Dennis  
Thompson

Michael  
Davis

Fred  
Smith



PHOTO: EMIL BACILLA

**Rob Tynner:** "Listen, when it comes to carousing, the MC5's entire career doesn't amount to one week-end for Motley Crue."

was kind of like a brotherhood, there was a serious underlying thing, but since it was conceived with a sense of humor I always thought it worked. As long as you were laughing, and everyone was having a good time, everything you were saying was true. Kids just ate it up and it seemed like there was nothing that could stop it. It wasn't until the whole thing became confrontational that it lost its power.

There was always a big sex scene with us. The White Panthers were the party of dope, rock and roll, and fucking in the streets—but mostly fucking in the streets! That was our crusade—the act. The act was more important than the person you did it with 'cause it represented freedom. Our van was like a rolling fucking mattress. And of course we used "free love" as a pickup line. It was like if you wouldn't do anything you were being counter-revolutionary!

Fucking was like playing music. In fact, I still look at music like a sex act. The best part of the MC5 was the music, all the talking and shit was part of the party, but when we played, that was revolution. We did more for the revolution in getting arrested for saying "Motherfucker" on stage than anybody did throwing dynamite. Kids could relate. When we'd get taken away, they'd be yelling "Bullshit!" at the cops, but when it got to the point of blowing up

C.I.A. offices, they were like, "I don't know about this revolution stuff...." It wasn't funny anymore.

There was a lot of pressure on us from all different sides of the population of underground people. There were a lot of facets to it, people into politics, nature, drugs, music. When the whole thing was just, "the movement," it was cool, but when it was separated into factions—like you talked about "the Weathermen" or "the Eastside Motherfuckers" or "the Hogfarmers"—it lost the energy. It became these people and those people. Somewhere in there we got crucified, we got offered up.

We played a show at the Fillmore East, where Bill Graham had this open dialogue with the Eastside Motherfuckers, who pressured him into letting all the people in for free. Street gangs showed up with knives and bike chains and it turned into a riot, but the worst part about it was when the record company sent a limo down to pick us up. We had no other way of getting around New York! So the screaming mob sees the "revolutionaries" getting into the limo and starts throwing "Kick Out The Jams" singles and yelling, "You get in those limos and you're dead!" Suddenly we were the enemy, we didn't stand for what we said we stood for. After that, I don't think we ever felt good about anything we did.

Five finds the visiting California Girls to be anything but counter-revolutionary.

■ 6/68: Blue Cheer, the only Bay Area rock band worthy of not being earthquake victims, bring their royal loudness into the Motor City to share a satanically swank triple bill at the Grande Ballroom with the Stooges and the MC5. High school senior Roger Miller (future Mission of Burma guitarist/eventual nobody) sneaks his dad's Super 8mm equipment in and catches the whole show for posterity. The resulting footage still airs periodically throughout the metro area on local access cable.



■ 11/68: White Panther Minister and



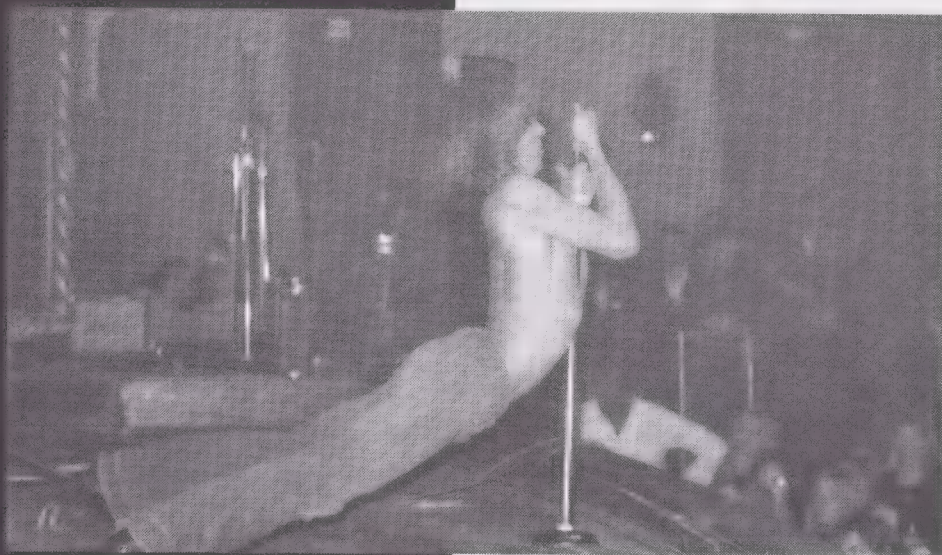


PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. KEVIN PLAMONDON

### Iggy in 1970

all-around good guy Pun Plamondon goes underground after allegedly blowing up the C.I.A. Recruiting Office in Ann Arbor. An ardent environmentalist as well as a peoples' hero, Plamondon is apprehended two years later after being stopped for throwing an empty beer can out the window of his van.

■ 4/70: After an intolerable six months of living with the MC5, Ted Nugent packs up his loin cloths, cross bows, and meat tenderizer and heads for the hills. Says the Nuge "I couldn't stand their hippie ways and filthy habits. I was always cleaning up after everybody!"

■ 7/70: After "poet" Jim Morrison fails to get out alive, Iggy Stooze is sought as a replacement singer/media event for the Doors, but Elektra execs abort the plan after witnessing the Iggy deep-throat a mic and circumcise himself with a broken bottle of Strohs.

■ 6/72: Motown records (the unwitting parent of a generation of mawkishly nostalgic, middle-aged Big Chillers to-be) closes shop on Woodward Avenue and heads west to Los Angeles.

■ 11/72: P-Funk's relations with the Process Church of the Final Judgement take a sharp turn for the worse when queen bee Mary Ann "Hectate" DeGrimston catches the Thang in Cleveland and asks aspiring "Brother" George Clinton (the first black man she's spoken to since breaking off her engagement with Sugar Ray Robinson) "What is this 'funk' you speak of, I fear it may be anti-'Christ'" (an alias of Mary's hubby Bob). Refusing to give up the funk, George soon jumps the "Joyful Process" ship.

■ 10/73: Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed on a near-lethal mixture of Vernors and Mr. Clean, Creem Magazine co-editor Lester Bangs streaks across the infield during a heated Tigers-A's playoff game. While spending the night in the Wayne County Jail, Bangs borrows a cellmate's well-worn copy of William Burroughs' nonsense epic *The Soft Machine*.

metropolis trying to recover its dignity, but rather an overwhelmingly negative vision of urban violence run amok, a sort of Hobbesian Disneyland of arrestable offenses. Somewhere in the mid-70s Detroit ceased being known as "Hitsville, U.S.A." and started to be referred to as "Murder City, U.S.A.," a tag the city has yet to shake (eventhough Washington D.C. is the new Number One with a bullet.) Ask anyone who isn't from the area what they know about Detroit, and chances are they'll quickly bring up the police car that devoted fans flipped over and torched outside Tiger Stadium after the victorious 1984 World Series. Certainly the city's perpetual p.r. pratfalls (Mayor Coleman Young's hilariously indisputable paternity stink, the annual Devil's Night wienie roast, the erecting of an enormous and symbolically-clumsy black fist in the middle of a downtown boulevard to honor legendary fighter Joe Louis, the post-Pistons b-ball bacchanal that had more to do with Revelations than it did with Isaih, the *New York Times Magazine* 7/29/90 cover story boldly proclaiming "The Tragedy Of Detroit," etc., etc.) have not helped much either, giving Detroit a media black eye the likes of which only local boxer Thomas Hearns seemed capable of delivering. (Even the mighty Hearns is vulnerable to this Motown Murphy's Law; if "the Hitman's" brother was really intent on accidentally blowing his girlfriend's head off, he might indeed have picked a less publicity-conscious moment than on the eve of the boxer's long-awaited rematch with Sugar Ray Leonard).

A similar dilemma of image overshadowing actuality has plagued the Motor City's musical ventures of the last two decades. In the latter part of the '60s, around the same time the racial tension in the city was boiling towards riot temperatures, underskilled suburban burn-outs, following the time-honored tradition of white musicians imitating mo' better black ones, plugged in their amps and created a crass and messy mixture of

Motown's rhythmic heart beat and John Coltrane's holy wail, adding deafening distortion via the pre-pinball Who to arrive at an unprecedentedly-brutal riff rock. In the beginning, it was just a sound: big thick guitars, fast power chords, an ample amount of feedback, and more than enough wah-wah to rearrange the genetic makeup of any healthy listener. Unlike the similarly straightforward, no-frills thud that followed it, however, this music *grooved*, it *swung* — not merely heavy metal, but something much *funkier*; noise, maybe, but noise raised to the level of *art*. Henceforth, music of such aggressive and oppressive volume, intensity, and attitude became synonymous with the Detroit area, and by all rights, the city can lay claim as the source of pop music's hard rock tributary. But somewhere along the way, somebody forgot to acknowledge the originators of this "Detroit rock and roll," and the accurate identities of its pioneers and primary practitioners have been clouded and obscured. To enter into Detroit radio airspace is to discover that "Detroit rock" means not the MC5 and the Stooges, but Bob Seger and Mitch Ryder; that the



Old Bob Seger.

pinnacle of live energy captured on vinyl isn't *Kick Out The Jams* but *Live Bullet*; and that the quintessential statement of rock music's power and capabilities isn't *Fun House* but *Night Moves*. Abused, ignored, and forgotten, Detroit's true musical overlords have been forced underground, desperately gasping for the air and press coverage heaped upon their mainstream cousins, with both camps fighting spike and vein for the rights to tattoo the proper credentials on their spindly arms, bandying about the term "Detroit rock" like a tennis ball until it has been totally emptied of meaning.

To get at the source of the problem, one must lay a good deal of the blame squarely on the sagging shoulders of local radio. To be sure, the ignorance of FM radio stations is a moot point; certainly this kind of willful blandness exists all over this great and tasteless land. No doubt that when Cleveland airmen talk their brand of local rock, they don't mean Pere Ubu or the



Pagans or the Electric Eels; surely Michael Stanley, not John Morton or Crocus Behemoth, sports the equivalent of Seger's rock tsar crown. The operative difference, however, is that in Detroit the local media *really, truly* believe that Seger, Ryder, *et al* comprise a meaningful thing called "Detroit rock and roll" without the contributions of the Stooges or the Five. Upon the demise of freeform FM formats in favor of corporate memo'd playlists, Detroit radio began to wallow in the boulder-rumped exhortations to boogie of a guy like Ryder and has since continued in the most logical direction, embracing sensationally mediocre/ nationally obscure dullards like the Rockets (who no doubt intended to repay their benefactors with their chestnut "Turn Up The Radio (I Need A Quick Reaction)") and the Look ("We're gonna rahck/how 'bout you-ooh/Don't you sit on your ahss/and don't you be no foo-ooh"), all in the name of



**Mitch Ryder.**

doing their duty to "support local rock and roll." By actively honing the narrowest possible definition of that term (read: "white"), Motortown air jocks completely nixed homegrown cataclysmic skullfucks like "Papa Was A Rolling Stone," "Superstition" (though Stevie Ray Vaughn's virtually identical cover suffered from no shortage of air time), "Higher Ground," and the entire Parliament-Funkadelic catalogue from their playlists and set the stage for what had to be the nation's most virulent anti-disco backlash: Detroit Rockers Engaged in the Abolition of Disco, commonly known as D.R.E.A.D.

Now it's pretty easy to see why music like disco, which despite its many and manifest flaws was indeed intended to evoke a physical reaction beyond reloading the one-hit pipe, would intimidate the mid-dial titans of complacency. But when combined with a dose of old-fashioned nellie-phobia, the almost-debilitating fear this music inspired in these people was downright embarrassing: the programming powers-that-be mobilized the mass issuance of Visa-style D.R.E.A.D. cards that allowed concerned Detroit rockers to get 10% discounts on midnight Molly Hatchett laser shows and the latest Head East or Journey albums (the early stuff, before they "sold out"). It's obvious that if rock wasn't

**Mrs. Fred Smith of St. Clair Shores, MI, models an ultra-attractive cardboard barbecue apron.**



already dead, disco wouldn't have posed such a threat. Let's face it: there's something mighty desperate about having to force-feed the fortysomething Bob Seger's marzipan elegies to life-on-the-road and fast-fleeting-youth down the ears, noses, and throats of a helpless public (I for one have the verbatim lyrics to no less than 25 Seger gems stamped indelibly on the creases and folds of my gray matter, and it ain't because I slap a copy of *Stranger In Town* on the platter when company is over.)

While the television media concerns itself with focusing on the violence and ugliness of the city, local radio is obsessed with creating a lily-white, antiseptic image, not unlike a rock version of *Leave It To Beaver*. It's possible (and damn right probable) for an R'nR consumer to grow from adolescence through to obsolescence without ever hearing a snatch of the Stooges or the Five. Tuning into the FM in the very early a.m. might provide the rare and unexpected discovery of hearing a particularly enlightened d.j. pay late-night



stumbles across the term "heavy metal kids," and soon begins applying it to glitter acts like Mott The Hoople. Later, in an east side restroom, Bangs shares a nutmeg-laced El Producto with Brownsville Station brain trustee Cub Koda, who illustrates the proper (and later widely accepted) definition of "heavy metal" by puffing and slapping out an embryonic, human beat-box version of "Smoking In The Boys' Room" on his thighs, lips, and forehead.

■ 12/73: God officially approves the



Mothership when three beams of solid light strike the fuchsia Mercury Cougar that George C. and Bootsy are driving from Toronto to Detroit.

■ 3/74: Midway through a particularly haywire Stooges gig, Iggy targets constipated Creem co-editor Dave Marsh for a non-consensual golden shampoo and shower. Unable to repair his split ends, the terminally humorless Marsh leaves Detroit in a huff, taking his rigid and cranky baggage to the Big Apple, where he takes over *Rolling Stone* and dedicates himself to the slavish worship of Bruce Springsteen and the bitter defamation of punk rock.

■ 2/76: Still freaked-out from Suzi "Oh my God/no time to turn" Quatro's tipsified on-through-the-off-ramp Bobby Unser imitations, Paul Stanley pens "Detroit Rock City."

■ 4/76: In one last show of post-commune togetherness, overly drug-friendly ex-MC5 van mates Wayne Kramer and Michael Davis wind up in the same federal prison in Lexington, KY.

■ 4/77: Casablanca releases KISS ALIVE!, two LPs worth of everybody's favorite lunchbox heros tearing the roof off of Detroit's Cobo Arena. On the album's back cover, 16-year-old future Meatman Tesco Vee (the blonde guy on the left sans raised fist) proudly displays his felt-tip homage to Gene, Paul, Peter, and Ace.

■ 5/77: Loath to sully the illustrious musical legacy of Grand Funk Railroad, Mark Farner takes a cue from Kansas, Boston and Chicago and names his new rock band after his lovely home town, Flint.

■ 10/78: Fate plays a joker as U of M dance student Madonna Louise Ciccone emerges from behind the counter at Miller's Ice Cream and discovers 11-year-old future MI TORBOOTY softball team member Matt O'Brien barricaded in the crapper, hidden behind a heavy cloud of cheeb smoke. Flustered and offended, the diligent scoop maiden boots him from the parlour and their futures are forever intertwined.

■ 11/78: A buzzed and punchy Jad Fair slithers into State Discount and tries to stuff a "Oh How I Hate Ohio State" sweatshirt into the neo-Hopi bookbag he bought at the last Dead show, but is caught in the act. After spending a busy night in the city hoosegow, Jad (who at this point was "luvin' for a livin'") never quite regains his magic touch with the ladies, although his new-found loneliness soon proves itself to be rich subject matter for 1/2 Japanese song lyrics.

■ 1979: MOTORBOOTY Dis-Minister-to-be Rob Michaels trades his birthday cassette of *Get The Knack* for a couple pinpoints of Thai stick, disavowing any regional loyalty to number one Knack man and Oak Park, MI native Doug Fieger.

■ 1980: Remorseful progenitors of the



lip service to the Ig, but the requisite spin of "Five Foot One" speaks volumes about the reference point they're coming from. Iggy Pop might/might not be God and the Stooges might/might not be godhead; the problem is, if you lived in Detroit, you wouldn't know it either way. The methodical process of marginalization is so utter and complete as to remove most traces of these performers' very existence, and as the mainstream and underground are totally polarized, it's politically difficult/damn near impossible for one person to have feet in both camps. Thus, the situation of the Silverdome stoning is directly attributable to this cruel conundrum: anyone who would have attended the Rolling Stones concert would have had no idea who Iggy Pop was, and anyone who would have known who Iggy Pop was wouldn't have attended a Rolling Stones concert.

Needless to say, the print media hasn't done much to bridge this great divide; instead it's only helped to make Slow-Motown a city remarkably indifferent to its local music scene. As far as press support goes, "Detroit Rock City" is nothing but a KISS song. Obviously, Detroit is not a major media market like New York or Los Angeles, but beyond the perpetual problem of very few progressive performance spaces there is the added obstacle of no well-organized, well-respected alternative media. Taking all the above factors into account, it comes as no surprise that the mainstream dailies herald the middling and the banal, running music coverage that consists wholly of "in-depth" profiles of whoever happens to be so huge that you already know all about them from the supermarket checkout line, periodic *Romantics* status reports, and "Accent" or "Lively Arts" features on the old folks with their comeback attempts and detox sagas as they try to gain the recognition now for what they did 20 years and 60 pounds ago. These puff pieces glom any ink that younger musicians might aspire to receive, creating yet another insidious snowjob in the climate of ludicrous looking-back that keeps institutions like "classic rock" radio and the Stooges Wax Museum in business.

At the same time as most of the highly-paid experts are practicing blindness and deafness, there are those local "scene enthusiast" scribes for whom anything by the hometown folk is holy and sacred and not to be damned or described unflatter-

ingly. This attitude of, "Yeah, it might not be so original, but come on, these guys are from Flat Rock, give 'em a break" erodes whatever meager credibility their criticism might have and makes all their praise faint indeed. If something sucks, it sucks, regardless of whether it comes from Southfield or San Diego, Birmingham, England, or Birmingham, MI. Major offenders here are the all-scrub lineup for the *Metro Times*, long the city's lone "alternative voice" and a pretty whispery one at that: cold hard hacks like Kevin Knapp, Lex Kuhne, and Stewart Francke, to name the usual suspects, are spiritual stepchildren to the *Detroit Free Press'* Gary "Rap is not music" Graff, a beige and tepid writer whose love of mediocrity is rivalled only by his hostility to excitement. What binds these wags inexorably together is an utter inability to recognize anything of value, a failing that is so endemic, so pervasive, as to be positively pathological—always, *always*, they manage to find a way to overlook or omit the truly original, truly creative, truly underground bands and sounds that are being made, in favor of glowing notices for nth-generation pub rock drivel by musicians who only now have discovered safety pins. This lineage of ignorance stretches like a long thin noose from the end of the '60s to the dawn of the briefly happening '80s hardcore movement with the (fortunately) Touch And Go-documented Necros, L7, and Negative Approach, on through to the (foolishly) unrecorded p-punk damage of Phobolox, Sleep, Urgent Action, and Tom Gemp. All of these bands, who proved at least that there was something vital and vulgar worth covering, wound up beached in their own back yards, caught between the mainstream's typically icy shoulder and a purported alternative that was no less dim or lazy.

But lest we wax too long-winded about this whole affair, it's worth remembering that all of this hereditary hubbub is on account of two, count 'em, two bands: the Stooges and the MC5. Forget bill-padders like the the Up, the SRC, and the Rationals. Forget the empty-headed, fist-shaking, "power to the people" flatulence of folks like the Frost and Grand Funk Railroad, complete with all the sweat and facial hair of a band like the Five but with none of the aforementioned's worldbeating subatomic whomp. Disregard bandwagon-jumper Alice Cooper; he came from places wester and slicker for an Motor City overhaul, but only managed to change license plates. (And besides, Iggy never used Vampire Blood®.) Disqualify Parliament-Funkadelic on a technicality; although they were sometimes just as bottom-heavy as "the Big Two," they took the rock thing to such bodacious afronautic extremes as to be off on their own multi-cultural mothership. Keep Ted Nugent because of "Cat Scratch Fever" and "Stranglehold," but forget about the Amboy Dukes and the rest of his solo career (try to forget about the rest of his solo career). Add in the Sonic Rendezvous



Band and the early versions of Destroy All Monsters if you insist, but we're still basically talking spin-off bands here. In yet another example of image overshadowing reality, romantic fans thousands of miles outside the Metro area have created a cult of Detroit worship, concocting a mythological rock nirvana where there are free park concerts every day and hippies who don't stink, and inflating "Detroit Rock" into a sweeping and majestic term that refers to more than just the sound of two groups. Much to everyone's misfortune, many of these heavily-accented folks form bands and try to live this little fantasy, so that whenever your average late-coming and unimaginative fanzine "writer" starts dropping the D-word, one can be certain that he's just trying to say that x-band abjectly mimics the Stooges.

But perhaps the strangest thing about all this hoo-ha is how very little of either version of "Detroit rock" has had to do with Detroit's post-Pistols musical output. From the word go, the overwhelming majority of Detroit punk/new wave has ranked among the cheesiest yuk-rock ever to pollute the planet: nothing but skinny ties, skinnier sounds, and "nuts-with-a-z" shenanigans that make an evening of *Who's The Boss?* reruns look like a Las Vegas getaway with Superfly. Bands like the Mutants (their "Piece O' Shit" chronicled the life and times of a turd), the Boners (the lead singer's "Flying Nun" imitations still strike a raw nerve), and Angry Red Planet (when seeing this otherwise-lively group, few could watch the bassist's mock-epileptic tongue-wagging Jim Nabors-isms without tossing all of last year's lunches) quickly turned Detroit into the Borscht Belt of the Rust Belt, fostering a "Shecky-Green-with-a-funny-hat-and-a-farfisa-organ"-type ethic that continues to this very day. Try these recent superstars on for size: Elvis Hitler, Art Phag, Walk The Dogma, See Dick Run, Surreal Estate, and the Avant Gardeners, just to name a few (ba-dump-bump). This stuff almost makes San Francisco look happening by comparison. And of course, where would such an ethic be without an unholy host of bargain-basement Cramps knock-offs, guys like Snakeout, the 3-D Invisibles, and the Gories, who, after spending puberty reading nothing but *Cracked* and goofy monster comix, while away their adulthood balls-deep in other people's shopworn goo-goo-muck.

Even the music that was momentarily worthwhile, and which by far owed the most to the Stooges and the Five—the testosteronic testiness of hardcore—never consciously acknowledged its debt. By the end of the '70s, the Stooges' primary living proxy, Destroy All Monsters, had regressed from being one of the last great local originators to one of the first of the worst retreads. Rock, as played by the Stooges and the Five, had metamorphosed into "Rock," complete with truckstop clichés and biker get-ups. Destroy All Monsters had come to symbolize everything that was wrong with the Michigan

"underground" scene, a subterranean subgroup that hardly pierced the Earth's surface but was stone-hard set in all the wrong ways. In the eyes of local Ritalin-damaged, straight-edged chicken-chokers, the Monsters and co. were no more than Segers and Ryders who had failed to make it big, bathed in a drug-burned "rock and roll mystique" that had long become unconvincing. It wasn't until later, after hardcore's first generation had wised up to its limitations and left it behind to costumed clones/clowns, that the local "Class of '82" admitted their bloodties and began their current lionization of the "dynamic duo," joining the world's legions of *chuzzerai* completists in an acquisitive obsession with these fabled two bands' accomplishments (the body of which continues to expand with each bootleg release of Fred Smith tuning an acoustic guitar into a tape recorder.)

*June, 1990: Gamely heralding the release Iggy's latest vinyl stab at recapturing the decadence lost after Raw Power, Virgin Records executives bankroll a homecoming wingding in Royal Oak, a "V.I.P. only" affair for local rock luminaries and media hangers-on to rub elbows with the Wild One himself. Figuring that since they'd ignored him when he was great, there was no reason to start loving him now, the invitees keep to themselves, breathy over rumors that the "guest of honor"'s one-time collaborator, David Bowie, might soon grace the soirée with his regal presence. Suddenly, trumpets sound, a side door opens, a red carpet rolls forth, and Bowie sashays into the room. As everyone lines up to kiss Bowie's thin white ass, Mr. Pop quietly enjoys the munchies by his lonesome, the Rodney Dangerfield of rock among his own people, once again.*



So there you have it. "Detroit rock," initially an specific sound, then a confusing misnomer, has finally evolved into a velcro buzzword that ought to make any prudent consumer proceed *avec* caution. Detroit itself is still the same old bundle of contradictions that natives have gotten used to, which is to say that most Detroiters have come to accept it for what it is. The rest just move. ■

midwest hardcore scene, the pubescent Necros release 100 copies of their first EP. Produced for a mere \$180, this record soon commands up to \$400 a copy from investors/fools.

■ 3/81: Up and coming hardcore *übermenschen* Negative Approach convene for their first-ever practice in the oak-paneled rumpus room of lead singer (and future Laughing Hyena) John Brannon's boyhood home in upscale, turtle-neck-white Grosse Pointe, MI.

■ 4/81: Hurling caution to the wind and prematurely pan-frying his nest egg, ex-MC5 drummer Dennis Thompson abruptly quits his job programming the musical critters at Showbiz Pizza to join New Race for a tour of Australia, much to the disappointment of anyone awaiting a Banana Splits-style cover of "Black To Comm."

■ 11/81: Negative Approach and Bored Youth open for a world-weary and wrinkled Destroy All Monsters at Nunzio's Rock Palais in Lincoln Park, MI. Daunted by the youngins' blitz-speed scree and miffed by their lack of ancestral reverence ("Don't they know who we are, man?"), the Monsters warn Mr. Nunzio that they'll never play with bands like that again.

■ 1985: In the spirit of Grande days long past, notorious chicken hawk/school teacher "Uncle" Russ Gibb gamely attempts to squeeze blood from the stony corpse of hardcore by opening the Graystone, an all-ages venue where ripe young punk lads can show off their squeaky-new leather finery, get in fights, and serve as mouth-watering eye candy for the grinning Mr. Gibb.

■ 1986: With royalty checks from Montrose's cover of "Kick Out the Jams" (re-titled "Rock the Nation") beginning to dwindle, bassmeister Michael Davis takes to selling "M Go Blue" painters' hats outside of Michigan Stadium. Never a team to disappoint, the Wolverines rise to the occasion and reward Davis with a 56-14 victory over the fighting Illini.

■ 1987: While reposing on the pavement outside the Graystone Hall with his jaw shattered (courtesy of cane-wielding representatives of a local white power coffee klatch) industrious Touch And Go Records Mogul/estranged Necros bass guy Corey Rusk contemplates taking nutrition through a straw for the next few months and moving operations to a friendlier, more Big Black-influenced locale.

■ 1990: The Romantics, Detroit's answer to The Sex Pistols and one of the few bands to peak commercially (as opposed to creatively) with their debut album, try to bolster sales of LP number seven with a gig at a 200-capacity club in Ann Arbor. Embarrassed by the sight of leather-suited 35-year-olds on their knees, the club's promoter finally consents, allowing the "Ties to perform their first bona-fide sell out in almost ten years. ■



YER PRETTY FACE IS GOIN'  
TO HELL,

IGGY'S  
FROM MY  
HOME TOWN!  
WHEN HE SOLD  
OUT 8 SHOWS  
AT BOOKIE'S IN  
'78 HE LOOKED  
AS OLD AS MY  
DAD!

# A Detroit Punkography

THE PLACE  
TO BE IN

THE LATE SEVENTIES WASN'T NEW YORK, CLEVELAND,  
OR L.A., MAN, IT WAS DEE-FUCKIN'-TROIT!! THE  
MOTOR CITY. WE ROCKED HARDER THAN ANYBODY,  
I'LL TELL YA; HARDER THAN YOU! LISTEN...



# HELL, HELL, HELL, HELL!



LADIES  
AND  
GENT-



KONK!

IN THOSE DAYS,  
WHEN THE RADIO  
DEE JAY WOULD  
COME ON TO IN-  
TRODUCE THE  
BAND-AND PLUG  
HIS STATION-HE'D  
GET PELTED WITH  
BOTTLES AND BOOED  
UNTIL HE SHUT UP  
AND FLED THE STAGE.





SONIC'S RENDEZVOUS  
BAND AT THE  
OLD ARMORY:

I SAW  
THEM PLAY  
ABOUT FORTY  
TIMES.

PHILADELPHIA  
AND DOWN IN  
L.A. EVERYBODY'S  
TALKIN' THAT  
CIT-TI-TI-TI-  
TI-TI-TI-TI  
CITY  
SLANG!

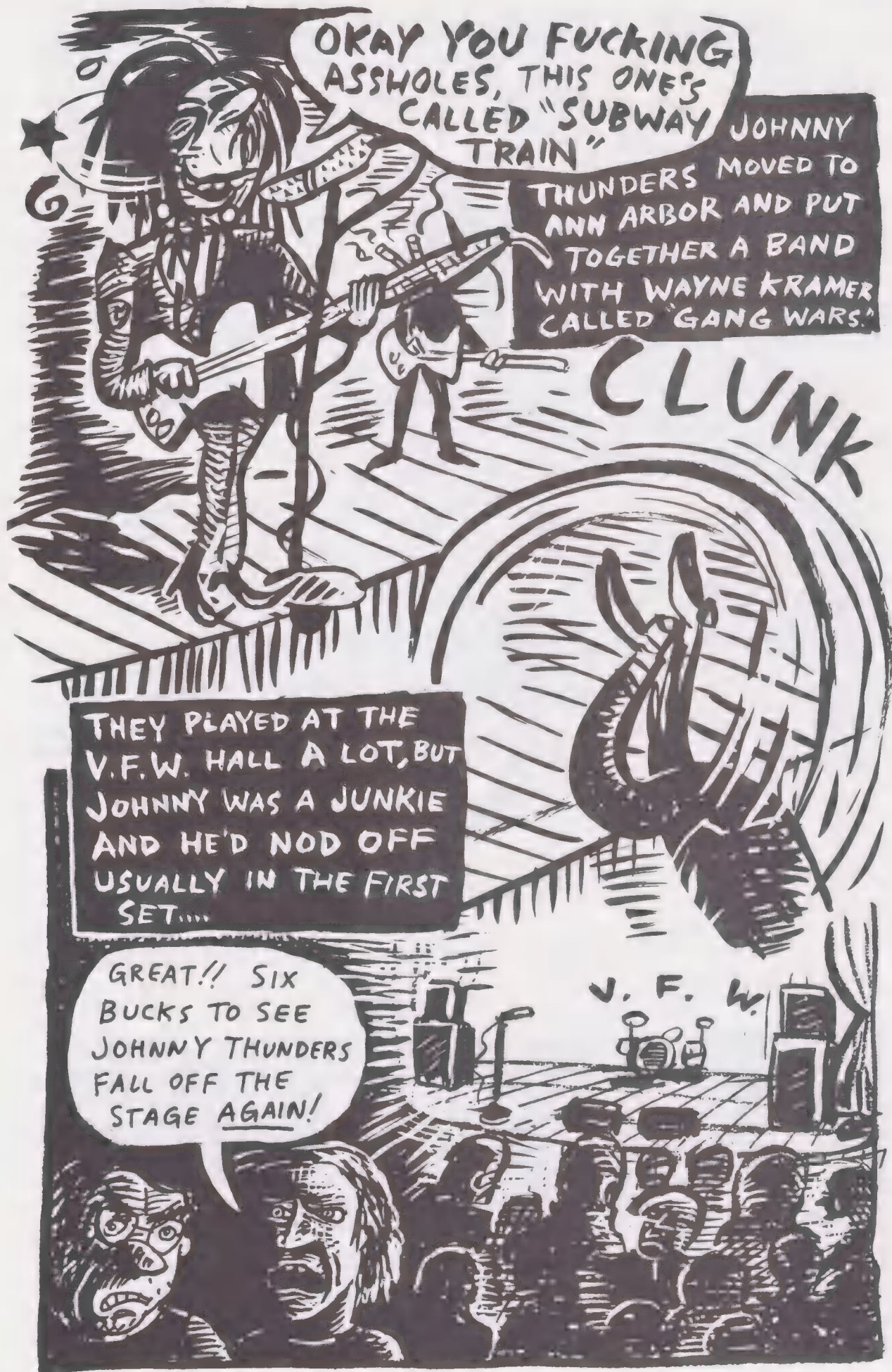
THE GOOD BANDS LIKE  
DESTROY ALL MONSTERS AND  
THE CULT HEROS WERE ALWAYS  
PLAYING THE SILVER BIRD OR

SECOND CHANCE. SOMETIMES WE'D DRIVE DOWN TO THE  
NEW MIAMI OR EVEN THE RAINBOW RANCH IN EAST LANSING



"TICKET OUTLETS" HADN'T  
BEEN INVENTED YET, SO A  
LOT OF TIMES WE'D HAVE TO CAMP OUT OVERNIGHT  
FOR TICKETS—AND THE GOOD SHOWS ALWAYS CAME  
IN THE DEAD OF WINTER!!







DONCHA WORRY HONEY  
 IF I BEEN TRUE —  
 'CUZ I GOT A LITTLE GIRL BACK  
 HOME, YA KNOW  
 AND SHE'S  
 JUST  
 LIKE YOU!



WHEN DAVID JOHANSEN PUT OUT  
 THE ALBUM "IN STYLE"  
 AND PLAYED THE PUNCH AND JUDY THEATER IN POSH  
 GROSSE POINT, DETROITERS SAID HE HAD SOLD OUT.  
 WE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT IN TEN  
 YEARS HE WOULD BECOME A POPULAR TEE VEE  
 STAR CALLED BUSTER POINDEXTER!



I GOT SANDWICHED  
 AGAINST A DOOR JAMB  
 FOR 45 MINUTES  
 AT THAT SHOW;  
 AFTERWORD I  
 PUKED ON THE HEDGE  
 OF A GROSSE POINT  
 MANSION AND DROVE  
 AN HOUR HOME.







IGGY  
POP MADE  
IT ONTO  
THE 11 O'  
CLOCK  
NEWS  
ONCE  
WHEN  
SOME-  
BODY AT  
A GIG  
IN ROYAL  
OAK  
CHUCKED  
A SEAGRAM'S

BOTTLE AT HIS HEAD. THE NEWS USED IT AS AN  
EXAMPLE OF THE CRUMBLING MORALITY OF DETROIT'S  
YOUTH. I WAS SO DRUNK I MISSED THAT SHOW  
ENTIRELY! I EVEN HAD TICKETS!!

# DAWG FOOD

## WOOF WOOF WOOF

IGGY LOOKED OLDER THAN RONALD  
REAGAN WHEN HE OPENED FOR THE  
STONES AT PONTIAC SILVERDOME IN  
1980. THE WEENIE-ROCKER CROWD  
BOOD HIM OFF THE STAGE IN FIVE  
MINUTES; REAGAN BECAME PRESIDENT  
FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS; AND  
THE REST IS ROCK'N ROLL HISTORY...



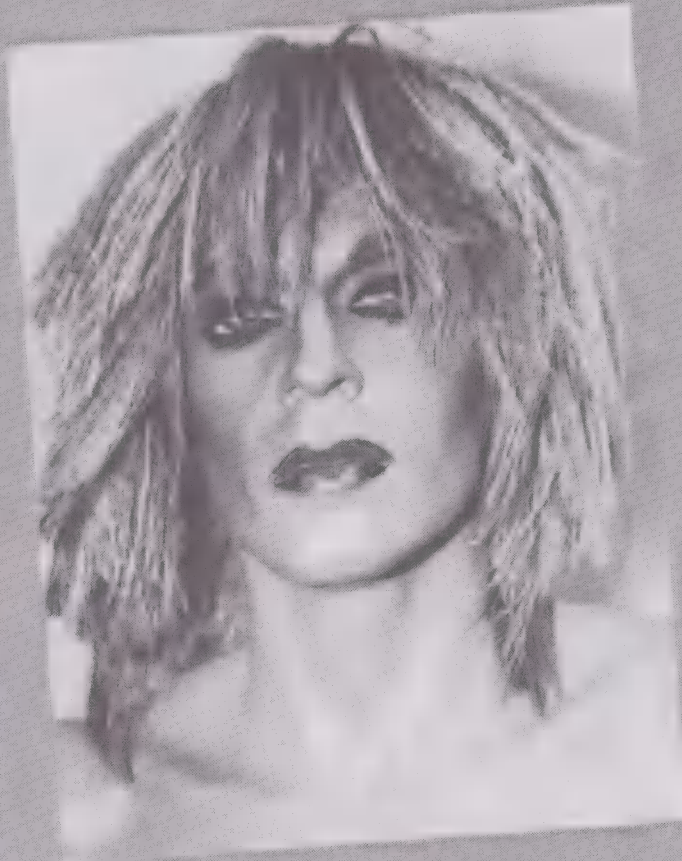
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## HOT SPOTS

# THE STOOGES WAX MUSEUM

MIND-ALTERING!  
THE WORLD-FAMOUS  
**stooges**  
WAX MUSEUM



The museum's life-like wax replica of Iggy Stooge is a big favorite among museum visitors. They also enjoy our conveniently-located gift shop and picturesque dance-able street!

**1520 HILL STREET  
ANN ARBOR, MI**



*Jim Osterberg, Pioneer High '65*

The next time you find yourself stranded in the nostalgic little never-never land of Ann Arbor, Michigan, with time on your hands and flowers in your hair, be sure to take in the "mind-altering" sights and sounds of the "World Famous" Stooges Wax Museum. Housed in a well-preserved clown-colored Victorian mansion that was once the headquarters of the White Panther Party, the museum towers majestically over an oak-lined street of Cleaveresque sorority houses, located just off the University of Michigan campus and only a stoned throw from the legendary "Acid Row" of the '60s. Just follow the steady stream of visiting Frenchmen through the historic doors, where Museum Curator Woody "Tim" Stahl will collect the \$10 suggested donation and lead you directly to the museum's souvenir shop. As you browse through the copious assortment of Stooges shot glasses and barbecue aprons, Scott Ashton-autographed drumstick fragments,

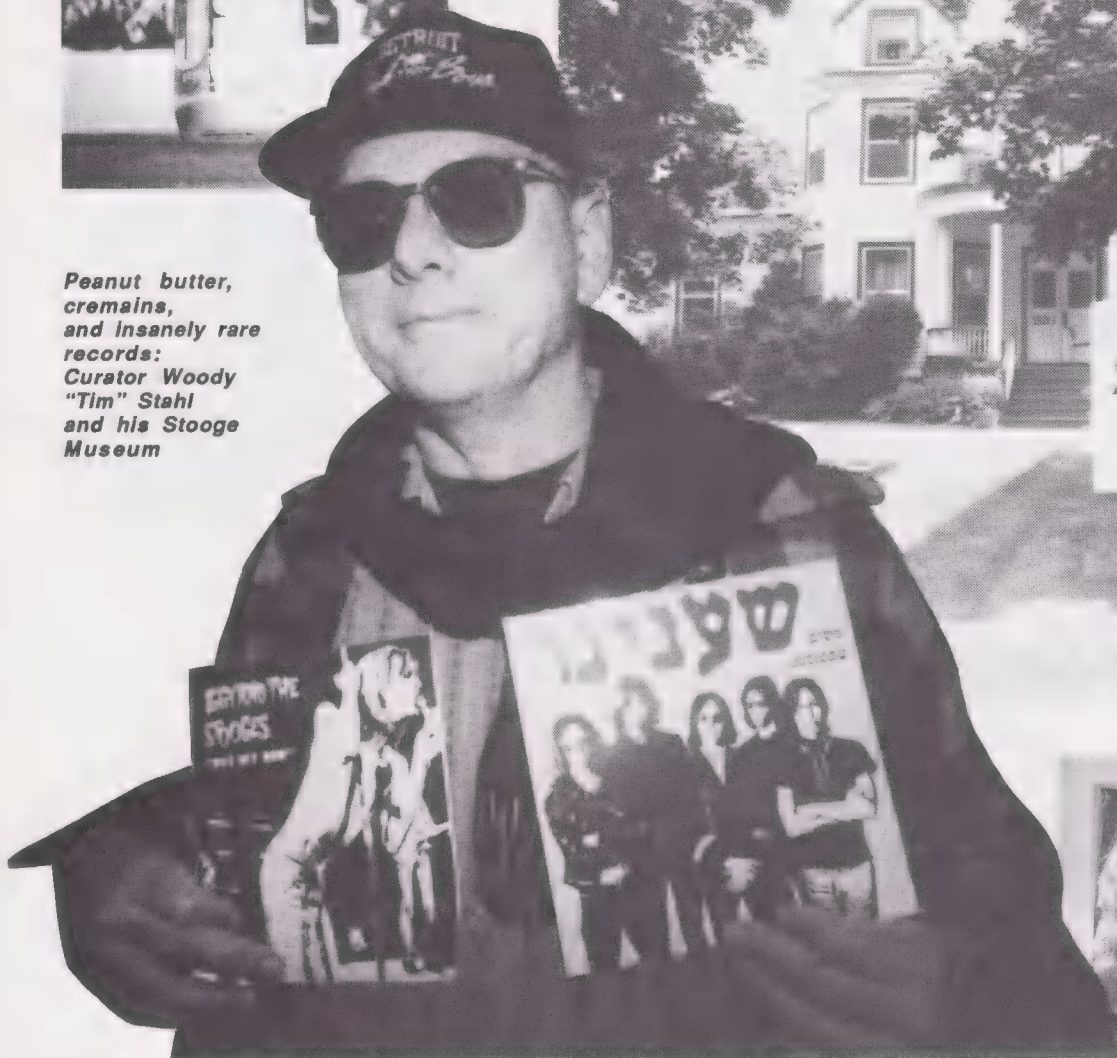




**Peanut butter, cremains, and insanely rare records: Curator Woody "Tim" Stahl and his Stoooge Museum**



PHOTOS: PHIL D. AND MIKE RUBIN



and Iggy Stoooge salt shakers (the salt pours out of the lacerations in his chest), Stahl will ask you confidentially in his Dexter drawl if you want to buy any "ar-ab to burn" (marijuana). Even though Ann Arbor's pot statutes are renowned for their leniency, something about the bouquet and vintage of his apparel will cue you that you should politely decline. Tell him instead that maybe you'll pick up the varnished driftwood wall clock emblazoned with a balls-out nude photo of Iggy that glows in the dark, on your way out.

"The Stoooges, they were the tits, man," says the always-reverent Stahl, whose blurred face is circled in an over-enlarged photo (from the Stoooges' September '68 Michigan Union Ballroom performance) which hangs prominently near the entrance to the "Hall of Items." "I must've seen them eleven, twelve....hell, twenty times," Stahl recalls fondly, "Iggy even kicked me in the nuts once."

Entering the hall itself you'll discover such priceless Stoooges artifacts as the Hoover

Upright that Iggy played at the Psychedelic Stoooges' first show in 1967, Ron Asheton's exhaustive collection of Nazi knick-knacks, the jar of peanut butter Iggy spread all over himself at the 1970 Cincinnati Pop Festival, and a small shrine with the ashes of Dave Alexander, the Stoooges' original bass player, who drank himself to death in 1975. In an adjoining room is a small screening area, where the many low-budget horror films in which Ron Asheton has appeared are run on a perpetual loop, and a listening booth, where you can choose from the museum's collection of over 250 bootlegs and foreign pressings of the same 23 Stoooges songs that are available domestically.

Of course, the highlight of the museum is the gallery of "incredibly life-like" wax replicas of all the band members, including such extraneous Stoooges as Scott Thurston, Billy Cheatham, and James Williamson. Fortunately, the figures are labelled, as it's hard to tell exactly who's supposed to be who. "I just got sick of people asking me what Joanne Whorley was doing in here,"

complains Stahl, "I had to keep telling them 'That's Zeke Zettner! Zeke fucking Zettner!'"

After wandering agog through the exhibits, head out back to the "picturesque" concession area/snack bar that faces the rusting remains of the actual Airstream trailer home where Iggy was raised, and self-consciously order an "I Wanna Be Your Chili Dog," some "Real Cool Fries," and a frosted "Shake Appeal" from a bosomy matron with "Rock Action" tattooed on her ample forearm. While you're eating, you can check out one of the many visiting Australian Stoooges tribute bands performing live re-creations of unidentifiable Stoooges hits on a makeshift facsimile of the West Park band shell. As you leave unreluctantly, the balding Stahl offers an apology for the earnest-but-clueless youngsters on the stage, "They're okay, but back in the Sixties, we all grew hair like that for real."

**The Stoooges Wax Museum, 1520 Hill St., Ann Arbor, Michigan. Open noonish 'til whenever, every day but Tuesday and Friday and Monday.**





*Grimshaw's first art job, 1966.*

Although he'd never say so himself, Gary "Speak Softly And Carry A .3mm Rapidograph" Grimshaw's once-ubiquitous concert posters, handbills, and all-purpose revo-hippy propaganda made him the visual architect of the Detroit Sixties. Like many of his contemporaries, the young Grimshaw's midwestern mind was blown by the psychedelic poster art he saw while visiting pre-Summer of Love San Francisco, but upon returning home he quickly developed a tight, balanced style that was much more Hamtramck than it was Haight Street. A consummate pro and self-described "team player," Grimshaw starred for legendary hash-era outfits like the MC5, the Grande Ballroom, and the White Panthers before they all folded and he found himself schlepping for bush-leaguers like The Urbations and the declining Creem Magazine. But in due time, nostalgic/investment-minded ex-longhairs started making long green and all things Sixties became collectible, so much so that Grimshaw's work has gained cash value as well as recognition. Grimshaw himself is now happily back at the old drawing board full-time, designing new posters and dealing old ones as the art director of ArtRock, a wildly lucrative Frisco-by-way-of-Ann Arbor poster business (necessary plug). We spoke to Grimshaw in Ann Arbor's greasiest greasy spoon just before he blew out of town.

ANOTHER MOTORBOOTY INTERVIEW BY "TOKE"

■ *You're from Detroit?*

■ Yeah. Born in Detroit, lived there most of my life. I was living in Boston and San Francisco, New York, L.A. and Ann Arbor at different times, and I was in the service for two years, from 1964 to '66.

■ *Right out of high school?*

■ Pretty much. I worked for a year at Great Lakes Steel, then joined the Navy because I didn't want to get drafted.

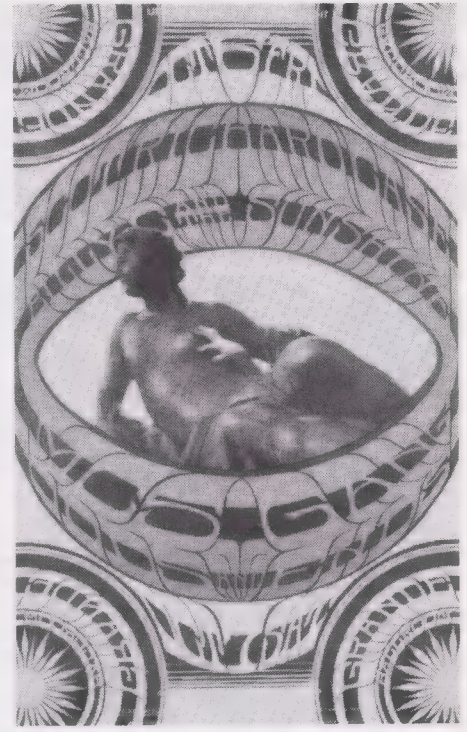
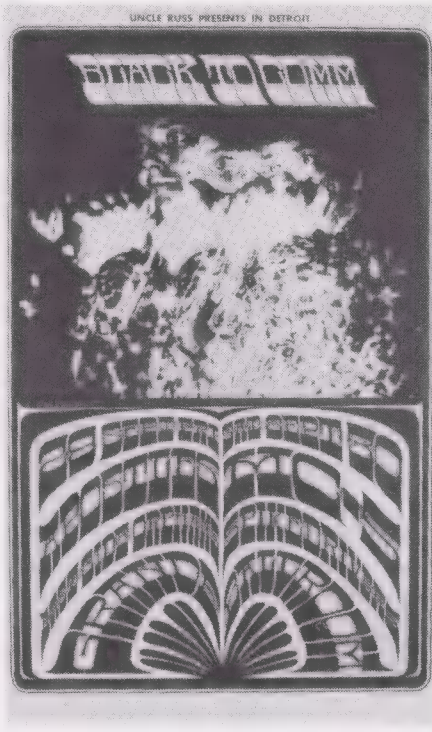
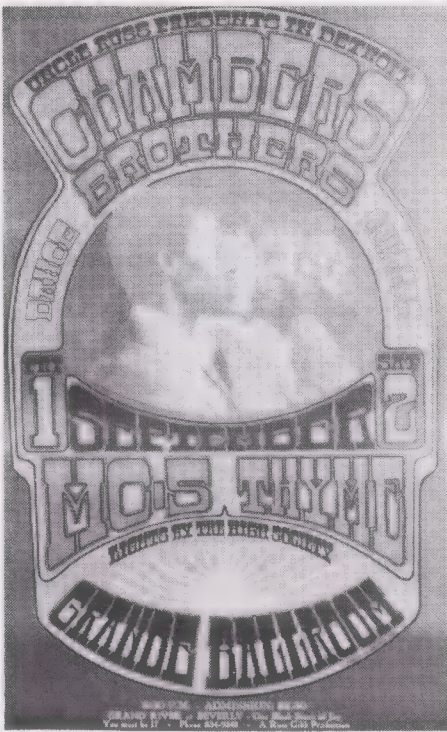
■ *If you volunteered your hitch was shorter?*

■ Right. They were on a big recruiting drive because the air war in Viet Nam was escalating like crazy, but they hadn't started the ground war yet, so the Air Force and the Navy were just recruiting like mad. I never went to college. I learned the technical end of the art business from my uncle, who printed all the Grande Ballroom posters. He had a shop in Dearborn and I just learned it on the job. I was drawing all the time. There are a lot of artists and people into graphic arts and design in my family. When I was in high school my best friend was Rob Tyner, the lead singer of the MC5. He and I used to do T-shirts, just like Stanley Mouse. We didn't have air brushes so we'd draw them with permanent markers. He would draw them and I'd color them in. He actually did a lot more than I did. We sold some, gave some to friends. It wasn't a business, though. The first art job that I actually got paid for was the first Grande Ballroom poster, for the first Grande Ballroom show, which was with the MC5 in 1966.

■ *So the MC5 went to your high school?*

■ Yeah, I think they all went to Lincoln Park High, except for Michael Davis, the bass player. He came into the band later. The MC5 got together in 1963. They were





in high school and they were basically a blues band. I worked a lot in high school and didn't do a lot of hanging out, but when I did I hung out with Rob.

I was in the South China Sea on the USS Coral Sea aircraft carrier and we were in the warzone for seven months. For the last part of my hitch the ship had to go into dry dock in San Francisco for repairs. The first day I had liberty the headlines in the Hearst papers were "Peace March Today," because it was the day of the second big Berkeley peace march from the campus to Oakland. The first one had ended in a riot where the Hell's Angels were beating up the peaceniks while the Oakland police just stood around watching. After that Allen Ginsberg went over to the Hell's Angels and got them to participate in the next one. I got some civilian clothes, took a bus over to Berkeley, and just marched with the march. It was the first day I was back and it was fascinating. I was aware of the beat culture in the fifties, and I was aware of what the left/hip culture was like, but I'd never seen anything on such a mass scale. There were probably five or six thousand people in the march and the whole circus surrounding it. I went back to Detroit several times from 1966 to '70, but most of that time I lived in the Bay Area.

■ **Were the psychedelic posters happening when you arrived in San Francisco?**

■ Yes. I started going to the Fillmore and the Avalon. When I came in during the early spring of 1966 the posters were just starting to go. In the Fillmore and Avalon series they were up to number six or seven and you'd see them in all the buses. That's where I'd always see them. And if you walked around anywhere, a third of the storefronts had a poster in them. You

went to the hip record stores and they'd have a stack of them on the counter and you'd just take what you wanted, right off the press. The same ones that are selling for twenty dollars apiece now. At that point I worked for an underground newspaper, *The San Francisco Oracle*, for thirteen issues or so. I got a lot of work in the *Oracle*, but I didn't do any concert posters.

■ **What was the Oracle like?**

■ It was a very creative place—a lot of people going in and out all the time. I always thought it was pretty disorganized myself, but I liked working there. I hadn't done newspaper work before that, but I did a lot of work on the *Fifth Estate* when I was in Detroit during the summer of '67. It was put together by Peter Werbe and Harvey Ovshinsky. They knew me as the Grande Ballroom artist, so I designed Grande ads for them and did some logos, but I didn't do layout. Peter Werbe handled most of that. I wasn't a full-time person there or anything like that. At the time I was more interested in the Grande Ballroom because I did the light show there every weekend.

■ **What was the light show like?**

■ It was very similar to the light show that they had at the Avalon and Fillmore. Liquid projections, slides, strobes. The liquid projections were done on a regular overhead projector like you see in schools, only with a real high-watt bulb. The glasses we used were actually watch glasses, like clock faces. They were curved and filled with colored liquid, and we'd float different sizes of them inside each other, with different colors inside each of the glasses. There were lots of slides, too. Leni Sinclair was the main photographer who worked on the light show, which was called "Pisces Eyes."

About a half a dozen people were the regulars for the light show, because there were three overheads and four slide projectors going at once.

■ **Was it all coordinated?**

■ Yeah, about as coordinated as we could get it!

■ **When did you first meet John Sinclair?**

■ It was at a party that his wife Leni threw for him when he got out of the Detroit House of Corrections after his second bust. There was poetry reading all day long and jazz bands, and all the people that John had worked with in the past were there. And at the end of the evening the MC5 played, and that's when I met John and that's when John met the MC5 and that all happened at that time. That was in 1966.

Later I was in a communal living situation with John and Leni and a couple other people, and we put out a paper. John was into publishing, he had already published a lot of poetry books. We had our own shop. We had a mimeograph machine and a stencil maker and we put out a paper called *The Warren Forest Sun*. It was an alternative to the *Fifth Estate*, but it was like the *Oracle*, it wasn't published on a very regular schedule. We put out about six or seven issues during 1967 and early '68. When I went back to California in '69, I was the production manager of the *Berkeley Tribe* for about a year.

■ **That was a really big time for underground publishing.**

■ Yeah, the underground press was going like mad, there was one in every city. They had an arrangement where every paper would send a copy to every other paper, as part of the underground press syndicate. Since we put out a paper we





would get all the underground papers from all over the country. When you'd see them come in every day you'd realize what a big phenomenon it was. Some of them were great, like the *East Village Other* and the *Chicago Seed*, just really good papers. The *L.A. Free Press* and the *Berkeley Barb* were some of the more original ones, the founders of the whole concept. The *Tribe* was interesting because at the beginning it was composed of *Berkeley Barb* staffers who went on strike against Max, the owner. I think it was mainly a matter of political differences—they thought he was more reactionary and aligned with the hip merchants more than anything else. He wouldn't give up any editorial control, so they split. But he hired a whole new staff, so *Berkeley* had two underground newspapers. It probably could've supported three or four. I don't remember any actual circulation figures on the *Tribe*, but it was in the hundred thousand range. Hundreds and hundreds of people in the Bay Area depended on the underground press for a living. Papers would come in Friday morning and there'd be a line of people to buy them, actually waiting for them. Then the staff would sell them on the street all weekend and make enough

money to support themselves. Tourism is a big industry in the Bay Area. There are a lot of people on the street all the time, so they could really sell a lot of papers. No freeways. In Detroit if you want to get somebody's attention you have to buy radio time, so they can listen to it when they're driving in their car.

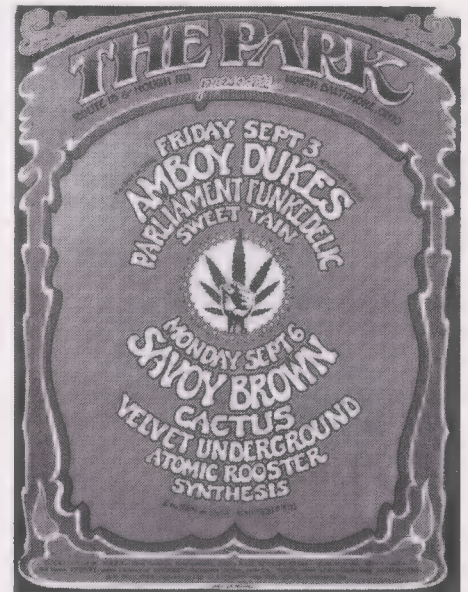
■ *But that wasn't how the shows at the Grande were advertised.*

■ No, Russ Gibb depended pretty much on the posters. But he had a network of high school students to help with distribution. He built this up so that when the cards came out they would just be distributed in a pyramid system and they'd go through all the high schools in Detroit. The students were pretty organized. They'd get a stack of cards, pass them out in school and then they'd get into the Grande free.

■ *Was it mainly handbills instead of posters?*

■ They started out doing both. But since posters are good in store fronts and since Plum Street was probably the only place where there was foot traffic, the posters weren't really functional. They did maybe a dozen posters and cards before they switched to cards only.

The Grande stuff was all done in one day, tops. As soon as I got the



information I just started working on it and didn't stop until it was done. I'd take it to the printer and come home and crash. It was just panic. I didn't even have time to think about it, which is probably good because the first impulse about a design is usually right. It's just that they weren't executed as well as they could've been. I think I started out at about \$25 for a poster design, and by '69 I eventually got up to about \$75. \$35 or \$40 was the average payment for artwork. At that time the Avalon and Fillmore were paying between \$200 and \$300. The Grande budget was miniscule compared to that. Also, the Avalon and Fillmore would book far enough ahead that they could give the artists two or three weeks to work on the posters. So these were done under a lot more difficult circumstances.

John started working with the MC5 more and more as their manager during the time I was involved with the Grande. The place where I had been living evolved into the MC5 house, and I moved out, because I preferred to have my own place. They moved to Ann Arbor and then I moved to Ann Arbor, and then I moved to Boston and later Berkeley, and was gone for 1968 and '69. During that time the MC5 and the White Panthers evolved in Ann Arbor and I wasn't part of the original inception of all that. But I was in constant contact with them over the phone and through letters and I did artwork for them and sent it to them. I was "Minister Of Art In Exile." So I was still connected to what was going on in Detroit, but I wasn't doing Grande stuff anymore. Carl Lundgren took over that. The MC5 recorded their first album at the Grande on Halloween in '68. I did a design for the cover, but Elektra Records had their own art department and a full-time art director and all their album covers had the same look to them. The same guy who did the Doors covers did the MC5 cover. So they rejected my design on that basis and the MC5 didn't have it in their



contract to have artistic control over their covers.

I was mainly in Boston to study macrobiotics. I was macrobiotic all the time I was there and ate basically grains and vegetables, ate no meat or dairy products, and I didn't use any drugs or smoke pot. Well, maybe a little. But macrobiotics was what I was there for. At the end of 1968, before the winter hit, I moved to California. We drove across the country in a van. I lived in Berkeley and San Francisco from late 1968 to early '70, working on the *Tribe* and doing underground comics. Carl Lundgren was out in San Francisco then, and he and I put out two issues of an underground comic, *Tales From The Ozone*, and I also contributed some panels to *Slow Death*. I never felt very comfortable doing comics because it's hard for me to work within a literary frame of reference. A comic is basically an illustrated story. I'd always get bogged down on the pictures and forget the story. I feel a lot more comfortable doing posters than I do comics.

I went "underground" during that time because there was a warrant out for my arrest, for possession with intent to sell marijuana. I think that's what the charge was. Eventually I lined up a good lawyer and figured out what the case was and realized it was something we could beat. Then I came back and surrendered and went through the court proceedings. In 1968 the charge was a ten-year felony. I was basically facing the same charges that John Sinclair had been incarcerated for a couple years for, but by the time my case went to trial, the freedom rally had

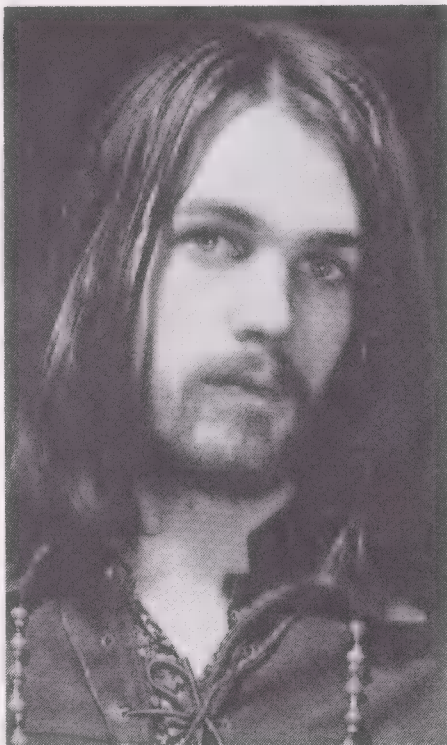


PHOTO: IVOR DAVIDSON

Gary Grimshaw in 1968.



Reject sleeve art for the MC5's *Kick Out The Jams*

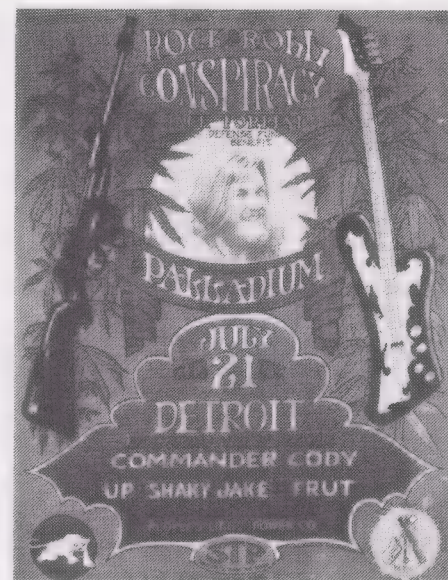
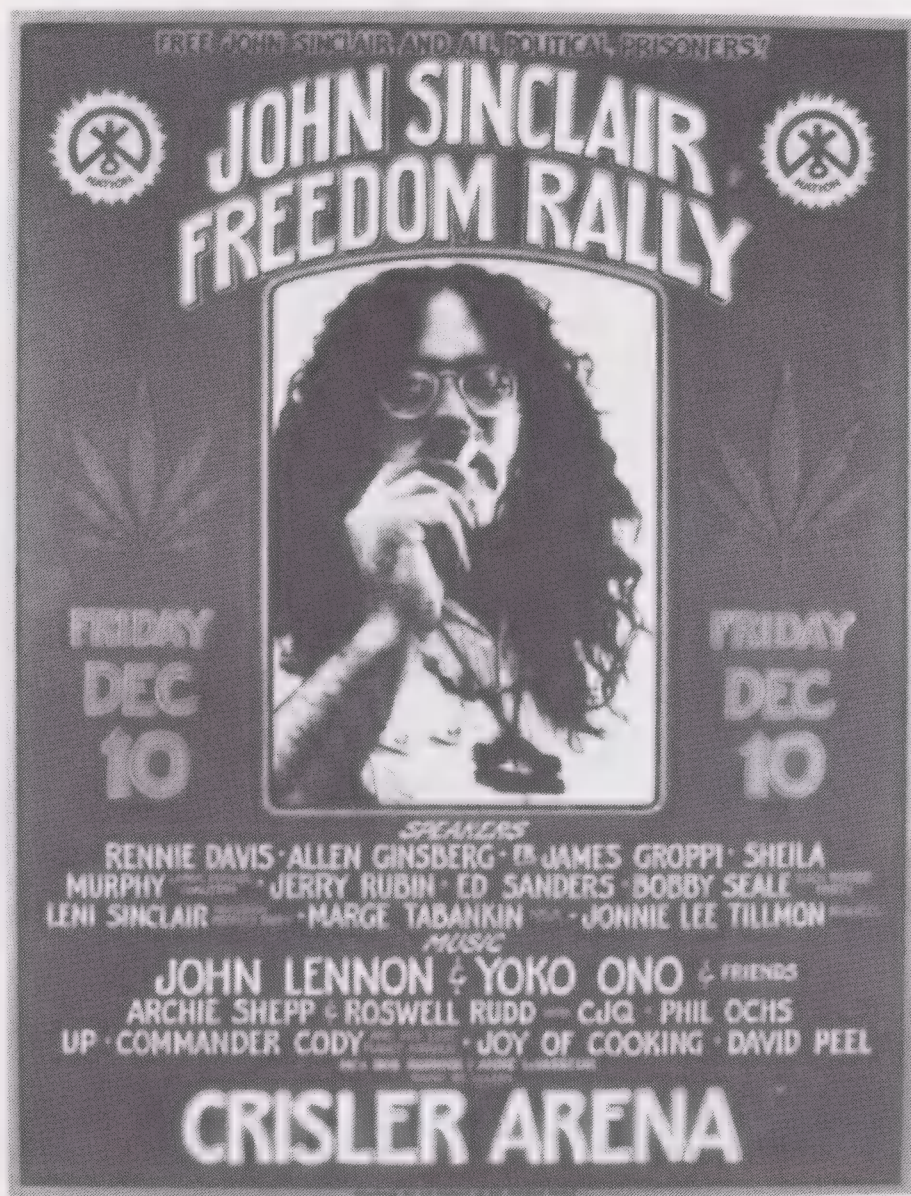
happened at Crisler Arena, and they changed the law—virtually the next day—from a ten-year felony to a six-month misdemeanor. The charge was in Traverse City and they immediately dropped it because it wasn't worth the trouble. So I had it dropped, but it did keep me away from Michigan for two years. During that time, there was so much going on that I figured I'd just get lost in the shuffle. But the FBI did show up at the *Tribe* office in Berkeley. At that time Pun Plamondon (*Gun-totin' White Panther honcho accused of blowing up a recruiting station—ed*) was on the ten most wanted list, charged for conspiracy to destroy government property. I think because they were looking for him they were also looking for me. I was in touch with David Sinclair, who was the head of the White Panthers and the John Sinclair Freedom Fund and the whole effort to get him out. So they coordinated my legal problems with his and I came back and worked full-time through all of '70 and most of '71 under David's direction, doing "Free John Now" stuff and posters for shows at Crisler and Eastern Michigan. John finally got out in October of '71.

■ So your involvement with the White Panther Party was pretty heavy?

■ Oh yeah, I was very sympathetic to it. At the time the war was really going to

the roof, the anti-war movement was really heavy and it didn't seem like we could get anything done or changed through normal democratic channels. And it caused a lot of people to stop and think about having to get organized outside of the system. So that's the kind of attitude that was going around generally, and for me personally, especially when I got out to California, working on the *Berkeley Tribe*. People into radical politics related more to the *Tribe* than any other newspaper, and they were very sympathetic to what the White Panthers were doing in Ann Arbor. So the whole mood of everything escalated for me. As I said, I worked full-time for the White Panthers in Ann Arbor. Then the White Panthers evolved into a different kind of organization called the Rainbow People's Party. They started running food co-ops and forming coalitions with other organizations in Ann Arbor to run candidates for City Council and change the local laws. The White Panthers were frightening to people. That was one part of the reason why the name was changed and the general attitude of the people in the White Panther Party changed. They thought it was more effective to have a positive image. To put it in a time frame, now we're talking about late '71, '72, after John was released. John hooked up with Pete Andrews and did two Blues and





*The chronically-incarcerated White Panthers provided Grimshaw with plenty of work.*

Jazz Festivals in Ann Arbor in '72 and '73, so the Rainbow People's Party evolved into Rainbow Productions, because we had to organize a business in order to put on the shows. I was the art director of the Blues and Jazz Festivals both years, and I worked full-time, doing all the advertising and press kits and things like that. A lot of the things that the Rainbow People's Party—and before that the White Panther Party—was doing, like publishing a newspaper and running food co-ops and things like that, were turned over to other people in Ann Arbor. Other people got involved, and once the organization was set up, they did it and we didn't have to do it. All the things we set out to do, we more or less accomplished, one by one.

Eventually, things progressed to a point where I was just burned out. It was just really intense all the time. By '74 the organization as a whole wasn't under the gun the way it had been. At that point

Nixon was having to give up the war and Coleman Young got elected Mayor of Detroit. The end of the war put a pin in the big balloon of the Sixties, because it was all pretty much organized around the anti-war movement. Politically, things were turning over really fast. Culturally too, in that the whole generational tension was dissipating because the young people who had pushed it to a head in the sixties were having their own families, and the older generation that had been lined up against them was softening its attitudes. All the tension went out of those situations, and everything changed. Everybody was basically just trying to keep their lives together. At that point I just wanted to get out of Ann Arbor because it was very claustrophobic to me. So in '74 I sort of cut my ties with John and the organization and moved to Detroit, which I always considered my hometown. Later, John moved to Detroit, and we've worked together several times

since then. In Detroit I free-lanced, did advertising graphics for Bamboo Productions, who did all the big shows at Cobo Hall, and did lay-up for *Creem* Magazine.

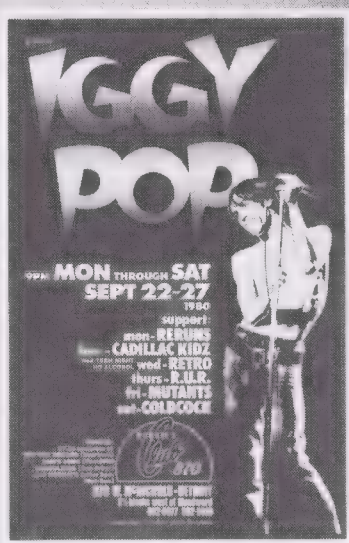
■ Robert Williams once said that artists who did rock album covers or posters never got the kind of acclaim for their work that the musicians did.

■ Well that kind of acclaim is the payoff in the music business. If you do make it, the scale of success is so huge that it's just unbelievable how big you make it. With graphic arts and visual arts in general, you never get to that point. But although a visual artist's fame grows slowly, it's more secure. When you create a piece of work, the work's still there. It doesn't go away. In that way, being a musician is a lot tougher than being a visual artist, because in music you put out all this energy, and the minute you stop playing, it's gone. And to record it—to





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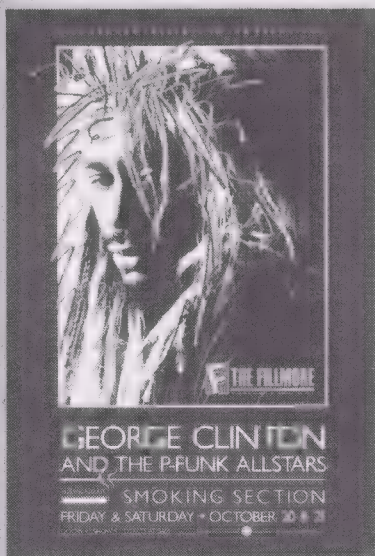
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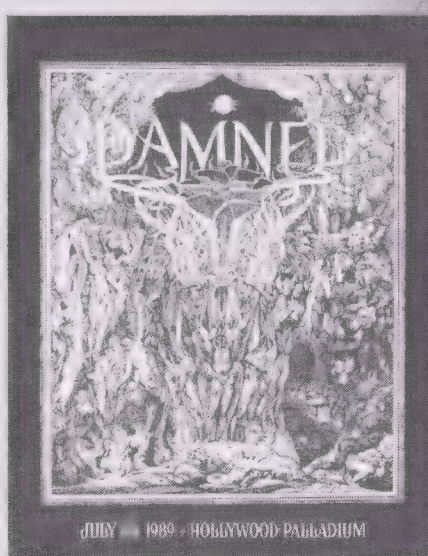
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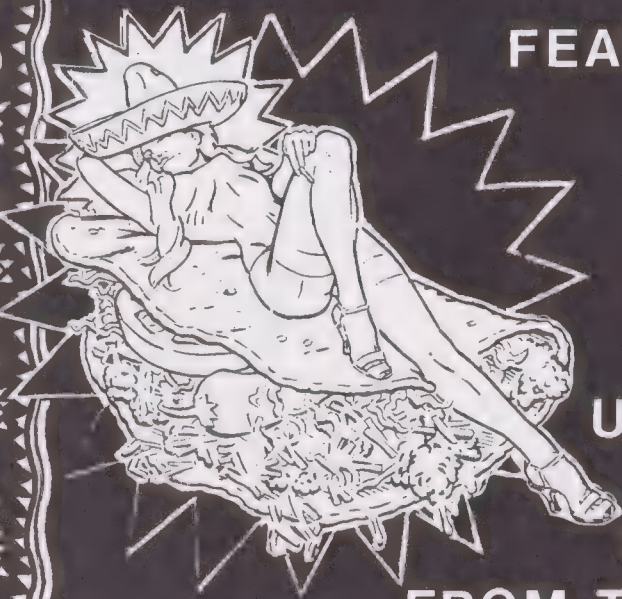
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make an object out of it that you can hold in your hand—is enormously expensive. Most of what a musician does just dissipates into the air. Whereas everything I do—some of it will get lost or destroyed or something, but most of it still exists somewhere.

■ *Earlier you said the kids of the Sixties became the parents of the Seventies. Now they're nostalgic and they've got money to spend on things like old posters, which makes businesses like ArtRock possible.*

■ Right, and they remember seeing the posters. And they say "I used to have one of those, I got it down at the record store, or a friend brought it back from San Francisco. Where is it?" And they go digging around and they realize it got lost or folded up or something, and they see an ad in *Rolling Stone* that they can get fresh copies. Originals, not reprints. Just like the one they had. There have been other companies that have had these posters available, but they just didn't market them well. It's not really nostalgia, because nostalgia's kind of a dirty word in some people's minds. Both the artwork and the music from that period were very good. When young people today hear it, they like it. It rings a bell. They recognize what an exciting period of time it was and they probably wish that something like that was going on today. Plus young people are like a minority today. Population-wise, they don't have the impact that they did then. There was a bulge in population and the sheer numbers were huge. Now the numbers are very small and young people just don't have any power anymore. Life can be very dull and dismal for a young person growing up today. I'm glad I'm not growing up today, I had more fun then!

The past doesn't go away, it's still there. It exists in everybody's mind and in artifacts. The present is just an accumulation of all the past, so it's not gone, it's still here.

■ *Do you see what happened to the psychedelic posters happening with punk flyers and art, seeing that the quality of the punk stuff isn't as high?*

■ Well it couldn't be. As I said, there was a whole change in the economic situation. There was a lot of money floating around in 1966. Everybody was rich. You didn't worry about paying rent or anything. If you wanted to do a three-color poster, you could probably get one printed real cheap. The promoters and the bands could afford to do colorful, extravagant things. When it got to the late '70s and '80s, just putting a black and white flyer together was a big deal. You put as much work, energy and money into that as would go into a three-color poster ten years earlier. I know during the oil crisis, the cost of printing tripled. So things had to change. The artwork that



*Iggy's Instinct: thanks to Grimshaw, at least it looks good*

was done faster and simpler, like the cut-up collage approach to making flyers and the black and white printing, fit the time that it happened in perfectly. It was the only way you could do things. You didn't have the option of taking two or three weeks and doing a full-color poster. Things were happening faster, and the art changed to fit the situation. It was what it had to be at that time. I thought the whole punk thing, starting with the Ramones and the Sex Pistols, was great. It's influenced everything that's gone on since. As far as the punk stuff being worth money, it already is. There are plenty of people who collect that stuff and pay big money for it.

■ *Is there a story behind the cover you did for Iggy Pop's record?*

■ That came about when the poster I did for his week of shows at Bookie's in 1980 appeared in *The Art Of Rock*. He saw that and remembered me and remembered that the first time he'd ever seen the word "Stooges" in print was on a poster that I did. He put all that together and thought "Why don't I find out where this guy is and see if he can do an album cover for me?" He wanted to do a hard rock album. He'd just finished a tour with an album that had been produced by David Bowie. It was a very studio-oriented album that was more focused on him as a soloist

and not as a member of a band. It was successful, but he wanted to come back with an album that was band-oriented. He planned to put together a really good band, work out all the tunes with the band, then make the record. So he called me up and I was really excited, I got to do an album cover for Iggy. He flew me to New York for a weekend. When I got there, the band played the whole album for me. They played side one, took a break and had chinese food, then played side two. So I immediately knew what my work would be used for. The next day I worked up some sketches and went back and forth to his place and got the basic feel for it down. I came up with the design, but he participated in the design a lot.

■ *You've said that you're a "team player."*

■ Well, flat-out I'm a commercial artist. The work I do is mass art, as opposed to fine art. It isn't for display in a gallery, it's for printing. Commercial art is a good medium for what's going on, and it's more democratic than fine art because it isn't exclusive. There are thousands of copies of each work, so anyone can see or even own it. When I do a poster, there's input from the promoter, the band, a lot of people other than me. I am a team player, but I can pick which team I want to be on. ■



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REPORTED BY J.G. ALLEN

The crowd comes to its feet, clapping and hooting as Detroit rock stalwart Ted Nugent strides into the hall, his permed mane, floor-length fox fur coat and semi-attractive wife Shemane flowing behind him. Throughout the over-stuffed auditorium, exuberant fans jostle, shove, and finally kick-box each other for a better view of the normally loin cloth-clad star, who eventually reaches the microphone and greets them all with a hearty, "Sit down and SHUT THE FUCK UP!"

This is not the Nth Annual Whiplash Bash, the long-threatened Amboy Dukes reunion concert, or the kickoff brunch for the Damn Yankees MTV weekend, and there isn't a single doob-huffing downriver head-banger in the crowd. No, this is the Milford (Michigan) Township Hall, these people in eyesore-orange vests and camouflage golf hats are fully-grown adults, and this time it's the U.S. Constitution, not gonzo R&R, that has brought Nugent to the mic.

See, it seems that the rapidly yuppifying populace of this fast-growing burg didn't realize it was moving into one of the

region's happiest hunting grounds. Weary of buckshot holes in their picture windows and hunting boot tracks through their meticulously-tended Japanese shrubs, a group of immigrant Milfordites have tried to ban the nasty sport, along with skeet shooting and even backyard target practice. Enter Nugent, the Jesse Jackson of hunting crises.

Easily the most vocal recreational animal killer in the state, Nugent is now better known for his hunting exploits than for his hose-rock prowess. "Shit," remarks one hunting enthusiast, "I know Ted hasn't written a fresh riff since '75, but last year he bagged a near-record black bear with only a 45 pound bow."

In the course of his oratory, Nugent ruminates on American tradition, opining that "to ban an individual shooting his semi-automatic weapon in his backyard, that's not the America I know. You may as well ban poontang." Addressing the non-hunters in the audience, he explains that, "Hunting isn't like going bowling. It's not like taking a picture. It's not like

just looking at a mini skirt. You have to get into that shit, you've got to use it! Animals were put there for human beings to use, and anyone who says that man isn't a predator is a dipshit! The only way I can describe it is that it's like childbirth. That's the only feeling that would come close. It's not just a slaughter, it's a challenge. It's the life blood of us hunters."

In his final plea, the Nuge appeals to equal rights. "What's good for you isn't necessarily good for me. I would never say everyone has to kill and butcher their own food, and I don't think you should be able to tell me I have to buy mine at the A&P." With the crowd already beginning to applaud, Ted concludes on a philosophical note, reminding us that, "Everybody has to whack something, even if it's only time."

As Ted leaves the podium, anti-hunting forces fear for the life of their proposal and consider enlisting a rock and roll spokesman of their own. "It's too bad Harry Chapin's dead," grouses one hunting-hater, "But maybe we could get Michael Stipe to do it." ■





**A MOTORBOOTY INTERVIEW BY HENSSLER,  
O'BRIEN AND DÜRR, "WITH" ROB MICHAELS**

No doubt the name Ron Asheton rings a loud and distorted bell in the hemp-stained craniums of most MOTORBOOTY readers. During his tenure with the underground's sacred rock and roll cow, the Stooges, Mr. Asheton bludgeoned countless brain cells straight back to the Big Bang, laying down the meanest, rawest, and thickest six-string wail the Earth had ever heard. On *Funhouse*, the Stooges' second and finest album, he honed his manic craft to perfection, spewing layer upon layer of throbbing metallic grit and inspiring successive generations of sycophantic imitators. Post Iggy, Asheton continued the heavy rock thing, first with Joe Besseresque Stooge Scott Thurston and MC5 drummer Dennis

Thompson, né Dennis Tomich, in *New Order* (not to be confused with that sissy limey outfit), then secondly and most notoriously with *Destroy All Monsters* (featuring Creem Dream runner-up Niagara, née Lynn Rovner, on vocals), not to mention stints with Deniz Tek's *New Race* and an inconsequential current project, *Dark Carnival*. Now a leading man in off-off-Hollywood horror flicks, Asheton still lives with his Mother in Ann Arbor, where MOTORBOOTY finally caught up with him in his T.V. Room.

■ **MOTORBOOTY:** We heard your most recent movie role was playing a nun.

■ **RON ASHETON:** Yes, I did that in a movie called *Them* that was filmed at the mental institution in Pontiac, MI. I was in this nun-type costume, with a rubber forehead. We were the Jim Jones cult so we had upside down "J's" burned in our foreheads. They had this





# ON ASHETON

## I NEED MOE



*Ron Asheton fills in for his favorite stooge.*





# "We just wanted

little kid made up to look like a midget, sorta this little monkey man with hair all over. In the movie we take this drug that makes us really strong and crazy, and then we start deteriorating, we get pretty gruesome, and start killing a bunch of people. The lead actor was John Saxon, so I was actually playing John Saxon's wife. Every time he saw me he'd start shaking his head and laughing. I'm not sure when it's going to come out. In the meantime our company has done something called *The Wendigo*. I get top bill as a drunken hunter who lets this giant caribou-shaped evil spirit loose. We just got a script that they might be interested in about a rock and roller who's turning 40 and still rockin' and trying to cope with all the weirdness. They sent the script to Bob Seger, but he wouldn't even return their call, so now they've brought up me playing the part.

■ **How did you get into movies?**

■ We made Super-8mm films in high school, just crazed monster films.

■ **Were you the star?**

■ Well we'd take turns. Most of the time I would be the vampire or Dr. Mabuse. We'd take turns being cameraman, but mostly I just liked being the actor.

■ **Did your brother Scott ever help out?**

■ Yeah, I forget the title but I played Hitler and it was Hitler on the moon, getting his army of Nazis together to invade Ann Arbor. So we went down to the Diag on the U of M campus and we just kept saying, "Hey everyone would you mind stopping and pointing up like this?" A buncha people finally did it so we were like, "Shit, turn on the camera!" My brother was in an assassination scene up on the roof of a parking structure and he had this plastic pistol, and someone thought it was a real gun. So I'm up there filming and next thing you know I hear screeching tires coming up the parking structure and I know it's the cops. He just told us to stop, but after that my brother wanted nothing to do with it.

■ **Did you make a lot of films in high school?**

■ We did about maybe ten of them. One of them was called *The Strange Jew*. I played Hitler in that one also. Bill Cheatham, who was later in the Stooges for about six weeks, played the strange Jew. He was strange because he wore one red glove. So he comes in, we've got the guys wearing all my Nazi uniforms and we brand him and he takes the wine from us and rips off his shirt and it says "Superjew" with a big Star of David. He killed all the Nazis but he did it in weird ways, like by the smell of his armpit. I think I have that one, it's the only one that survived. Another one was simply entitled *Stories Of The War* and we'd just go out where they were building the expressway and pretend to be S.S. snipers shooting the other soldiers. I didn't want to get my German uniforms dirty, so we would just use the German helmets and armbands and an old

army jacket. The idea was just to film lots of falls. Some of the guys really ended up getting hurt because they'd pick up so much speed falling down the hills. Or we'd make vampire-type movies, just lurking around in the old Stooges band house that used to be out on Packard Road. We'd get things dark, and we'd get girls to be in bed with hardly anything on and we'd come in and bite 'em or knife 'em.

■ **Did you and your brother fight a lot?**

■ No, not really. He's younger by a year. We never fought but after being on the road with him...you know how guys double up in a room? I used to request another room away from him.

■ **Why?**

■ Well just because I'd done everything with him all of my life. We shared a room until I was seventeen. It was just his lifestyle. He's a slob, he's real messy. It's kinda like a Felix and Oscar situation. It's not like I'm that much of a Felix, but sometimes I'd just wanna be quiet and he'd wanna party. I'd be almost asleep and next thing you know there's like five girls and a bunch of guys, clouds of smoke, and I'd be like, "Yeah this is great, we only have to be up and catch a plane in four hours." So a lot of times I would just find the room that was farthest away from them.

As kids we had this thing where every night after dinner we'd go out and wrestle in the back yard and a lot of times it would escalate. Our mom used to flip because we used to destroy clothes every night. Most of the time he had his crowd and I had mine. My friends were guys that were into watching movies, and we were deeply into the Three Stooges. We'd go around with Three Stooges haircuts: one guy had a Curly crew cut, I would secretly put my hair down in bangs like Moe as soon as I left the house, and the other guy had a Larry-kind-of wig that his ma had rigged up for him. We pretended we really were them. I got my dad to buy me a 1931 Chevy. We'd get in there and smack each other around in this old car. It was perfect. We'd act out bits pretending cops were chasing us and we'd throw pies. Whereas my brother's friends, they were into forging notes from home so they could go to the gas station and buy cigarettes. When he was ten years old he'd steal things from the drug store. "Hey where did you get all that candy? Where'd you get those baseball cards when you don't have any money?" His crowd was into getting in trouble. They never got busted though. They'd throw rocks through windows and push people's winter wood supplies down the hill. He was the one who ran away from home a few times, hopped a freight train and realized, "Hey wait a minute, it's cold, it's getting dark, we better get off this thing." He jumped off, slipped and hurt his back and looked up and his hands were inches from the train wheels going forty miles an hour.

■ **So the band name was your idea?**

■ Yeah, we were sitting around the band house on Forest Court trying to think of a name. We had a summer sublet from these fraternity guys who had left all their possessions there, all their shirts perfectly packaged up, everything ready for when they came back to school. We never washed dishes, eventually the kitchen got closed off, and the screened-in back porch was up to our chests in garbage. We didn't realize that there was such a thing as a kitty litter box so the kitty kinda free-pissed and shit all over the house. We were sitting upstairs and we had just taken some acid and smoked a joint and decided that we had to think of a band name right then. So I said, "Hey it's like we're the Three Stooges now, we've got long hair, we get chased out of restaurants, college kids are throwing beer cans at us and trying to run us over!" Just 'cause of the way we looked, I'd be walking down State Street in 1967 and all of a sudden, "Whoa!" Full beer cans would come sailing at my head. And then they'd try to run you down. It was a real problem just



# to be rock guys."

because of the long hair. We were some of the first to have long hair around here. There were only a few others, a few students, and Jerry Youngkins, who had the Magic Veil Lightshow at the Grande and looked like Wild Bill Hickcock. Now he has a shaved head and puts out survivalist videos. I first met him at the Michigan Union cafeteria, we'd go in there and that's where all the longhairs and people from Detroit would come in. That's how I first started meeting Iggy besides the hallway at school. It was just a casual nod because he had a little Beatle haircut.

Anyway, at the Forest Court house is where we got our name. I was like, "Wow, we're gettin' high on acid—Psychedelic Stooges!" Everyone was going, "Boing!" It just turned lights on, everyone knew that was it. Later Elektra asked us to drop the "Psychedelic" 'cause that was a little weird.

■ *What happened when the frat guys came back?*

■ The house smelled like a litter box, and everything that we accumulated garbage-wise was there from day one til the last day.

Iggy got into the closets and wore the guys' shirts, all of them, but we didn't steal anything. Finally, the guys were coming back and we had to get out of there. Dave Alexander was still half-asleep and we were trying to pack and leave. He ended up putting his suitcase through this huge, old stained-glass window at the top of the stairs. The last thing we did was Iggy and I wrote "Hi what's happening?" on plates in mustard and left them on the mantel. We didn't get caught initially but we avoided that side of town. One day a few months later I was with Iggy and we'd sort of forgotten about it, and then we heard, "Hey there are those fuckin' guys!" They took off, one after me and one after Iggy, but we ended up losing them. They wanted to beat our asses!

■ *What were the early shows like?*

■ We used to invent our own instruments. We'd start the show with a blender with a little water in it and about fifteen minutes before we'd play we put a microphone in there and turn it on. People'd be like, "What the hell is that?" We also had a thing called the "Jim-a-

## N'YUK-N'YUKS THE BREAKFAST OF STOOGES





# “...they used lousy



phone” which was nothing but a large funnel. You’d put a microphone on a stand, and by lowering and raising the funnel you’d get different kinds of feedback. Iggy had golf shoes with a washboard with a contact mic on the washboard. He’d get on the washboard and do some fancy steps. Dave Alexander’s first job in the Stooges was to take a Kustom amplifier with a reverb unit in it, pick up the amp head and keep crashing it down, to make weird sounds.

Our first show was at the Grande. Iggy wore a nightshirt from the turn of the century. He took a piece of cardboard and corkscrewed strips of aluminum foil into it so that he had an aluminum foil afro, then he shaved his eye brows and painted his face white. We drove to the gig looking like that in Dave Alexander’s Corvair. This is really the truth: cars tried to run us off the road. A whole bunch of guys pulled up next to us yelling, “What the fuck is that?” And they wanted to kill us! When we got to the Grande, the neighbors were saying things like, “Motherfucker, what is that? Some kind of a mechanical man!” It was funny and we were into it but we were embarrassed and kind of scared at the same time. We played for fifteen minutes, that was all our set was, and of course there was no applause. Usually we basically just got up there and jammed one riff and built into an energy freak-out, until finally we’d broken a guitar or one of my hands would be twice as big as the other and my guitar

would be covered in blood. I wouldn’t even realize it at the time I was doing it. A lot of our shows were like that until we started finding little bits that were starting to get more musical. We stopped using the homemade instruments when we realized we wanted to get better and make records. I played “lead bass” for a while, and then we got Dave to play the bass and I switched over to guitar. When we first signed with Elektra, we only had three or four songs, which were just the chords to “Little Doll” and the riff to “No Fun” and the riff to “I’m Loose,” and we just sort of jammed those same three things and we’d wind up freaking out on each one of them, getting weird. We wound up going to New York to do the recording session. They listened to it and thought it was too short, so they asked if we had more material. We were like, “Oh yeah, sure,” but we didn’t. So I wrote “Little Doll,” “Not Right,” and “Real Cool Time,” in about an hour. I swear, each one of ‘em was one take. We got in a big hassle with John Cale because he walks into the session and there are our Marshall full stacks, hundred watt heads, everything cranked on ten. “Okay, record us!” He got really mad, and said we’d have to have small amps, that we couldn’t record with that set-up. So we had a sit down strike, we just sat down and started smokin’ dope until he saw it our way. So our first recording session was our album. Iggy had done some stuff with the Iguanas but it was our first.

## ■ So then you discovered free jazz?

■ Well John Sinclair introduced us to Coltrane, and we loved it. I still listen to him now, it’s some of my favorite stuff. We got Steve Mackay from the Charging Rhinoceros of Soul and Carnal Kitchen to play saxophone because we liked the Coltrane stuff and wanted to have better freakouts at the ends of songs. Steve lasted a fair amount of time but we sort of dropped him because when we went on tour it was just fun for him, ‘cause he only had to play a couple songs. By then, after the second album, things were winding down anyway. He ended up playing with an acoustic trio made up of junkies. (*The Violent Femmes-ed.*)

## ■ Were you tight with the MC5?

■ We did a lot of jobs with them. As a matter of fact, the first time the Grande opened to the public, it was the MC5 and the Chosen Few, and I was in the Chosen Few with Scott Richardson, who went on to lead SRC. That was our high school band. I actually did play the first note ever at the Grande. We did this Stones medley, and the first one was “Everybody Needs Somebody.” I played bass in that band. That’s when I first met James Williamson. And that was James’ last gig with the Chosen Few, because his parents were shipping his ass out to a school in New York.

Anyway, we met John Sinclair through our shows at the Grande, and when they had their band house in Detroit we would drive out there and practice. Then one time when they were on the road and all their women were at home, some people busted in and raped a couple girls and stole a bunch of stuff, so they said, “That’s it, Detroit’s just too dangerous.” They decided to move here to Ann Arbor. I think that I was the first guy ever to fuck a girl in the White Panther house, unless John beat me to it.

Dennis Thompson told me later that they all used to think I was a lousy guitar player. I liked Rob Tyner (*né Robert Derminer—ed.*) ‘cause he wasn’t as macho as the other guys. Wayne Kramer (*né Wayne Kambes—ed.*) and Thompson would sit around and see who could drink ‘til they dropped. I liked Mike Davis because he was the most easygoing. I’d wind up hanging out with Mike because he was more into the women. Once I lent him my leather jacket and my



# to think I was a guitar player."

Firebird Bass. A couple months later, I asked him where my jacket and guitar were, and he said, "Well the jacket got stolen and I smashed the guitar onstage." This was the original bass I played in the Chosen Few and the Stooges. Wayne Kramer got an old crummy guitar and they took 'em like baseball bats and squared off onstage and smashed the bodies together. I was like, "Thanks a million, pal. I loved that guitar!" But I always got on well with Mike. At the MC5 house if you brought any beer or pot over everyone was like, "Alright, give it up man!" We hated that. So Mike told us to put it outside his bedroom window in the bushes and we'd reach out and get it later.

■ *Was there friction between the political types and you guys?*

■ Well, we were pretty much good-time-guys. We never really got involved. We did some benefits but we never sold Black Panther papers on the street or anything like that. We just wanted to be rock guys. We thought that it was neat that they wanted to make things better for people, and we liked the freedom and the natural things that came with the '60s, but we were mostly into sex and smoking dope and playing music. None of us had licenses at that time. We were like, "Fuck the license bureau, fuck the draftboard!" We were only political in that sense.

■ *How did you deal with the draft?*

■ We all got out. I had just seen *The Caine Mutiny* the night before I went in, so I stayed up on speed and took a pair of dice with me. I told them I was a homosexual, that I had nervous disorders, and then I didn't fill out the forms correctly, to show that I could



Asheton, 1990



Destroy All Monsters, 1978

function as a human being. I refused to take the physical, so they sent me right downstairs to the psychiatrist, and then to a private doctor. It turned out that the doctor was gay and when he got me up on that table he whipped my pants down and just grabbed my balls really hard. After that, I went outside, and though I'm not normally a destructive person, I tore antennas off cars and found a rock and smashed in all the parking meters down the whole street. I got out though. My brother just went fucked up; he drank a pint of whisky and popped a bunch of reds. He went in and said, "G.I. honky motherfucker!" He was saluting everybody. They sent him to the shrink and he wound up puking on his desk. The worst part was he was out in record time. He would have won our bet on who got out the fastest, but he went over to the church across the street and was so loaded he passed out. He was arrested by the cops for vagrancy and thrown in jail. Iggy was there for a couple of hours, but Dave won. At the time he had long Brian Jones hair and he cut super short bangs so he had a page boy. He put make-up on, took a lot of drugs, refused to take the physical and just acted extremely weird. They





*Iggy, above, pre-Ashetons (as a '64 Pioneer High debate team member, in the top row, second from right), and post-Ashetons (with the Stooges in '70.)*



PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. KEVIN PLAMONDON

weird. They took one look at him and he was gone. He got out in a half hour.

■ *You mentioned earlier that things were winding down after the second album*

■ Weird junk stuff started happening, but the worst was after Iggy started believing the press. People kept saying "You're the one, you're the star," and he started believing it. I was sitting right there in my own apartment, and people were going, "You don't need these guys, they don't play that well, you should dump 'em and get a really good band, cause you're the only one anyone really cares about." He had all those people telling him all that stuff and he started breaking down. It was very stressful, it was the old syndrome of "I've got to top myself every night." You can't go and play for two years almost every night, jumping into the audience, getting banged up and getting stitches. The drugs really started fucking him up and he just got burned out. Once in Florida we were on a bill with J. Geils, and afterwards we wound up meeting with Peter Wolf, who said, "What do you want to get high on?" So he sends the roadie out and he comes back with a doctor's attache case full of drugs....

*(Mom enters, insists that she smells something burning)*

Nothing's burning, Ma. I don't smell anything burning.

So I just had a couple puffs of something and headed back to my room and there's a blood smear from the top of the wall and there's Iggy, he'd cracked his head on the side of the wall going back to his room and just sort of passed out. I took him to his room and there's this inch-wide split, open to the skull. So I kind of squeezed it back together with a bunch of bandages and told him he should see a doctor but he said no way. He had his hair dyed blonde so the next day in the car I was sitting behind him, looking at his matted bloody blonde hair all the way to Atlanta.

■ **RON'S MOM:** *Are you the only one smoking?*

■ Look, I'm sure nothing's burning. The ash tray's here and I haven't dropped any butts

Iggy kind of lost his sense of humor. He wasn't ever particularly funny, but he was a fun-loving person. He was a straight-guy, good-student-type, on student council. He was even wearing straight clothes—sweaters and madras shorts—until he met us and we kind of toughened him up.

■ *Did you make fun of him?*

■ Yeah. It wasn't like we tortured him or anything, but he started changing the way he dressed after meeting us. We were really important in changing him, because he really was shy and straight, so we'd all just kind of joke around when we were high, like, "Look at all those ugly people at the Burger King! They're the freaks, we're not the freaks!" But over the years his sense of humor was just drained. Whenever I see him he's just got that big frown all the time. He doesn't call and I don't have his number. I don't care if I talk to him, to tell you the truth. It'd be all right, but I'm not going to go seek him out or anything. The whole thing kind of ended on a weird note.

■ *How do you feel in light of Iggy's comparative success?*

■ Of course I feel a little bit of jealousy. I don't really hate him. He's got talent and he did have a lot of breaks. There have been a lot of different record companies, and David Bowie bailed him out a couple of times. He got a lot of help, and more power to him. That's



fine. When he goes out and plays those Stooges songs, it keeps the Stooges stuff alive. So finally after 20 years I can make some money off of it because of royalties. And it is because of him being out there that I'm doing that stuff. And hopefully it makes people wonder what ever happened to the other guys in the band, so my new projects have a better chance of being seen.

■ **What do you think of James Williamson?**

■ I liked him at first, but then he got real power-trippy, arrogant, and snotty. He was the other guitarist in the last double-guitar Stooges lineup, before we broke up the first time. When we got back together it was supposed to be temporary that I would play bass and then we'd go to two guitar players. It went to his head or something. He wanted to be Keith Richards to Iggy's Mick Jagger. He treated us really badly and he had this girlfriend who always caused a stink at the band house.

■ **What was she like?**

■ A rich bitch, that's even where that song came from. There's nothing worse than someone sticking their nose into band business and it would make us all so furious. She would make stupid suggestions about clothing or how a song should go a certain way. The worst part is that she was living in the band house and there were lots of other girls there, so she thought she was queen of the house. Her friends would fight and there'd be weird shit. We'd be at practice and there'd be a phone call for James and it would be her and he'd have to leave practice to go back to the house and straighten things out. It was just a pain in the ass. Even worse is when she'd be sitting right there at practice.

■ **Were girlfriends an ongoing problem?**

■ Not really. Usually everyone was really good about it. Heavy involvement while you're in the band was forbidden. You're like a soldier: you can have all the casual sex you want on the road, but don't let the girl rule or start changing you. My girlfriend did help me out in the end though, because when those guys became heavy junkies we had our own apartment where we weren't doing drugs. I had someone who was straight with all the other madness going on. Equipment was disappearing everyday, being traded for drugs. I'd go down to the practice room and the electric piano was gone, the echo unit was gone, the little practice amp—they all started disappearing. Iggy was trading them. It was like, "Hey Ron, your amp went for 20 dollars worth of heroin." The room that was their true shooting gallery was just off my apartment. They'd sit at this big round table, they'd draw some blood, and squirt it. The whole ceiling was covered in blood. They'd sit there with their syringes and just shoot blood at the ceiling, it was horrible, really creepy. I'd come downstairs and there's a crooked trail of something that was on fire dragged through the kitchen, through the practice room, out the door. Somebody had nodded off in the basement on their mattress and something caught fire. One time I luckily came down and there's Iggy nodded out with a lit Lucky Strike and it was already starting to burn his lip! I had to be on alert 24 hours and I'd make periodical sweeps of the house just to make sure it wasn't on fire.

I was never into heroin or downers. In the early days I did some hits of acid, and of course everyone enjoyed smoking that marijuana. The first time Iggy and Scotty ever did heroin was with Funkadelic, and at first it was all just experimentation. Everyone was handling things well, but their downfall, and indirectly mine, was that we got a new road manager named John Adams, and it turned out that he was a junkie. He got everyone else to snort it at first. I don't even know when the time came or how it happened, but the next thing I knew they started shooting up. Everything started getting really weird. Practices stopped happening, we were getting less jobs, and everybody would be off in their little hole in a heroin dream world. We used to have this thing we used to do every night, we'd all get together and we'd have "TV Room." We'd just sit and watch TV and have jokes, and there were always favorite chairs, and once you got out of that chair to piss or whatever, you'd lose it. So then we got into calling "No Musical Chairs!" but that still didn't work, so it'd be a contest of seeing how long you could hold the piss. My brother and Dave would have contests over how many non-stop toke pipes they could toke. Dave had the record of like 120. We would just sit around and have a good time and be a group.

A friend called and told me that he'd recently seen Iggy on a

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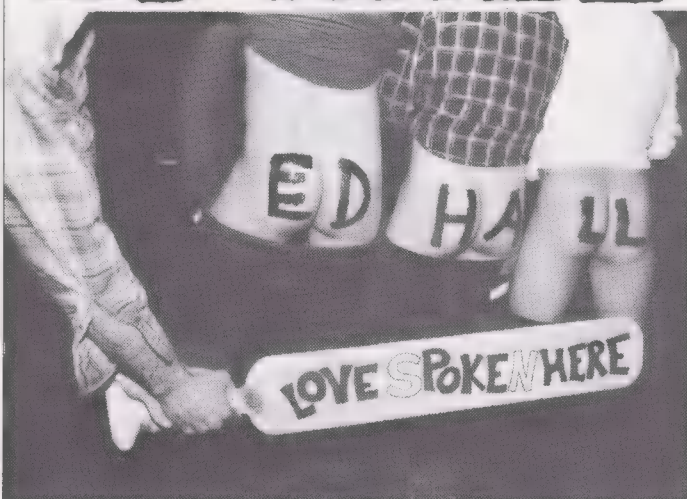
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college culture tour. He comes up on stage and plays guitar, then he puts on some Tibetan music, a little Coltrane, some blues, and the Stooges, to show how those different kinds of music were related. He said "The best times I ever had in my musical career were when we had a band in a house. I recommend to any of you people that want a band, get your band together and get a band house, and hang out"

But around the second album that stopped happening. I was sort of x-ed out, and it was just the junkies that would be together. Then finally, that was it, heroin broke up the band. Iggy was so fucked-up he had to stop. He eventually cleaned up enough to go to New York, and he just happened to be at the right place at the right time. David Bowie happened to be there, so they met, and the next day they went over to Columbia and got him a record deal. And he went over to England and took James Williamson. I remember how upset I was. He didn't even tell me this was going on. I just happened to hear about a party at the SRC studio out on Morgan Road and they were there. He was going "Oh yeah, by the way, James and I are leaving for England in a couple days." It was like someone just hit me over the head with a baseball bat. He didn't even tell us. If I hadn't gone to the party I would've probably read about it in a magazine or something. But it didn't work out because he called up and said how would you and your brother like to come out and play? After they'd auditioned hundreds of English bass players and drummers. "Oh, thanks a lot, after you go through everybody in England, then you call us up." And then he was still going to call it the Stooges. Yeah right.

■ *So you went to England, came back, and lived in L.A.*

■ Yeah. When I first moved out to L.A. I was living at the Hyatt House. I used to go in the bar every night to have a drink and listen to the weird jazz combo and stuff. One night William Shatner was there, and he was really drunk. I wanted to talk to him but he kept looking at me like I thought he wanted to pick me up or something. I was like "Whoa! I'm gettin' out of here, man!" It sort of freaked me out cause he was really fucked up. He wanted me to sit down. He didn't chase me around Hollywood, like Michael Davis always tells people, but he got kind of grabby, and I thought, "Nah, Captain Kirk can't be a fag." I felt really awful. Probably if I'd have been drinking I would have sat down just for the weirdness of seeing what would happen.

When we were in L.A. we hung out with these friends of a friend, and they lived right on the water in Malibu. I kept saying how this house down the beach was really dynamite. They told me that it was owned by Raymond Burr, and if you go there in the morning you can see him coming out in a satin dressing gown with a big boa around his neck and high heel slippers and I was like, "You guys are full of shit!" So we went down there one morning and there he was sitting at a little table having his tea and reading a newspaper wearing women's stuff.

■ *Did you talk to him?*

■ No way!

■ *What's the deal with your Nazi stuff?*

■ I started collecting it when I was ten years old, and I've amassed a pretty good collection. What got me interested was this show called *The Twentieth Century*. The Nazis always had cool uniforms, with the big eagle and stuff. I didn't like what they stood for, but I liked what they wore. I'm definitely against the killing of people and stuff, but I've gotten in trouble for wearing my gear. My comeback was always, "Better some crazy rock and roll guy wearing it than guys on the street wearing it for real. Otherwise there would be no rock show!" I always used to wear a black velvet armband over the swastika when I came out in full S.S. gear, but one night Iggy just ripped the velvet part off, showing the Nazi armband. Afterwards I get a call from Danny Sugarman, 'cause news of this had spread all over the place. We were scheduled to play the Academy of Music with KISS and Blue Oyster Cult, and Danny said, "I just saved your ass! The Jewish Defense League was gonna beat the shit out of you at the show tonight, so I donated a hundred dollars to them in your name." But of course Iggy still wanted me to wear the S.S. jacket that night.

Mostly our hassles were from college jocks, or else there would be just complete loonies at our shows. After one show this big guy



with a stick, who had been hassling us from the wings, came outside as we were loading out. Of course Iggy, who was the last to get in the car, had to confront him. So they're face to face, and Iggy spits a monster hocker in this guy's face. The guy goes to lift his stick, Iggy jumps in, the stick comes down and misses, and the car takes off. We go up to make a U turn and the guy is standing in the middle of the street with the stick. The road manager just punched the gas and goes, "Either he's gonna move or I'm gonna hit him." At the last minute the guy jumped out of the way.

Another time I came off stage and the next thing I know I'm on the floor 'cause someone just cold-cocked me. Then my brother was beating the guy's head against the wall. I don't know if it was perhaps the Nazi stuff. I wasn't wearing that much stuff. I always wore the iron cross, and I always wore that white S.S. parade belt but I stopped wearing the S.S. jacket, because things got too weird.

Once we were getting on a plane and I was wearing my S.S. uniform. It didn't have any swastikas or S.S. bolts or anything like that, but it did have the cuff band that said "Adolf Hitler" on it! The next thing I knew, the pilot was standing there glaring at me. I was surprised because usually they wouldn't let Iggy on the plane because he was filthy or he had torn pants or he still had silver make-up from his hair and glitter all over. Then the stewardess comes back and goes, "I'm responsible for you. The pilot wanted to kick you off the plane because he thought you were some Nazi guy. But I said that you seem like a nice guy so I vouched for you." That was starting the tour off, so I decided not to wear the jacket anymore.

■ **Do you collect guns?**

■ Yep. I've got some neat guns, including an A.K. 47. I'm a three-year member of the N.R.A. and I go shooting at a place in Manchester, MI. When I was in the Boy Scouts I had medals for shooting.

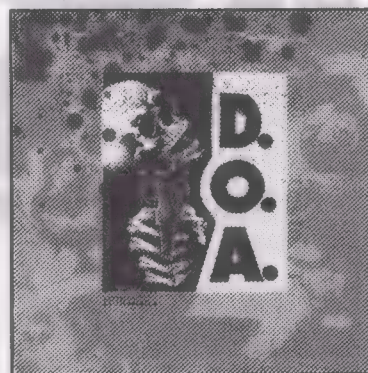
■ **When did you make the transition from Boy Scouts to rock and roll?**

■ My dad wanted me to be a Marine Corps flyer, 'cause that's what he was, but when I was 15 I got glasses. In those days you weren't allowed to wear glasses and fly. So his dreams were shattered but he was like, "Well you can still be 18 and be a sergeant and be in command of three tanks." While he was still alive, my brother was looking at the Sunday magazine going, "Wow look at this, The Beatles! Look at these guys!" He kept sticking the picture in my face and I kept saying, "Get those faggots away from me, man!" I finally grabbed the picture away from Scotty and flushed it down the toilet. Then my father died, and I knew I would no longer be groomed to be in the military. So I just started loosening up, and I learned to love The Beatles because they started the whole thing off for me. So I fell hard for it; my sister got the Beatles record and I started listening to it. Then we moved into this house and I'd see Dave Alexander; he lived down the street and he was the first guy I knew whose parents allowed him to have a full Beatle haircut. He liked George Harrison so he got whatever haircut George had and I liked John so I got whatever John had. Dave was just a year older but he had all the records and an electric guitar. The first time I went over there we were listening to the Beatles and he asked his mom to bring us something to drink, and she brought up three Colt 45s. I was 16 and I got bombed. We'd just spend all afternoon smoking cigarettes and playing to the same records over and over, "The Bells Of Rhymney" by the Byrds and "We'll Take Our Last Waltz Tonight" by the Beau Brummels. We thought we were great, so we were like, "Okay let's do it without the record," but we couldn't play it without the record.

Later we went to England for a month. Every day we'd take the train into Liverpool in time to catch the 1:00 session at the Cavern Club. "Whoa! We're going right to where the Beatles started out!" We saw the Who. "My Generation" was just out and it was just catching on. We heard that and we went "Wow!" I got a piece of the twelve string that Townsend busted that night, and our friend Brian went and cut off a piece of the rope from the bathroom, saying, "Yep, this is from the rope the Who pulled when they had to take a shit!" When I came back I had long sideburns and boots with Cuban heels, a leather jacket and a turtleneck. Going to England was the end of any thoughts of any kind of regular life. I knew right then and there that I didn't ever want a job. ■

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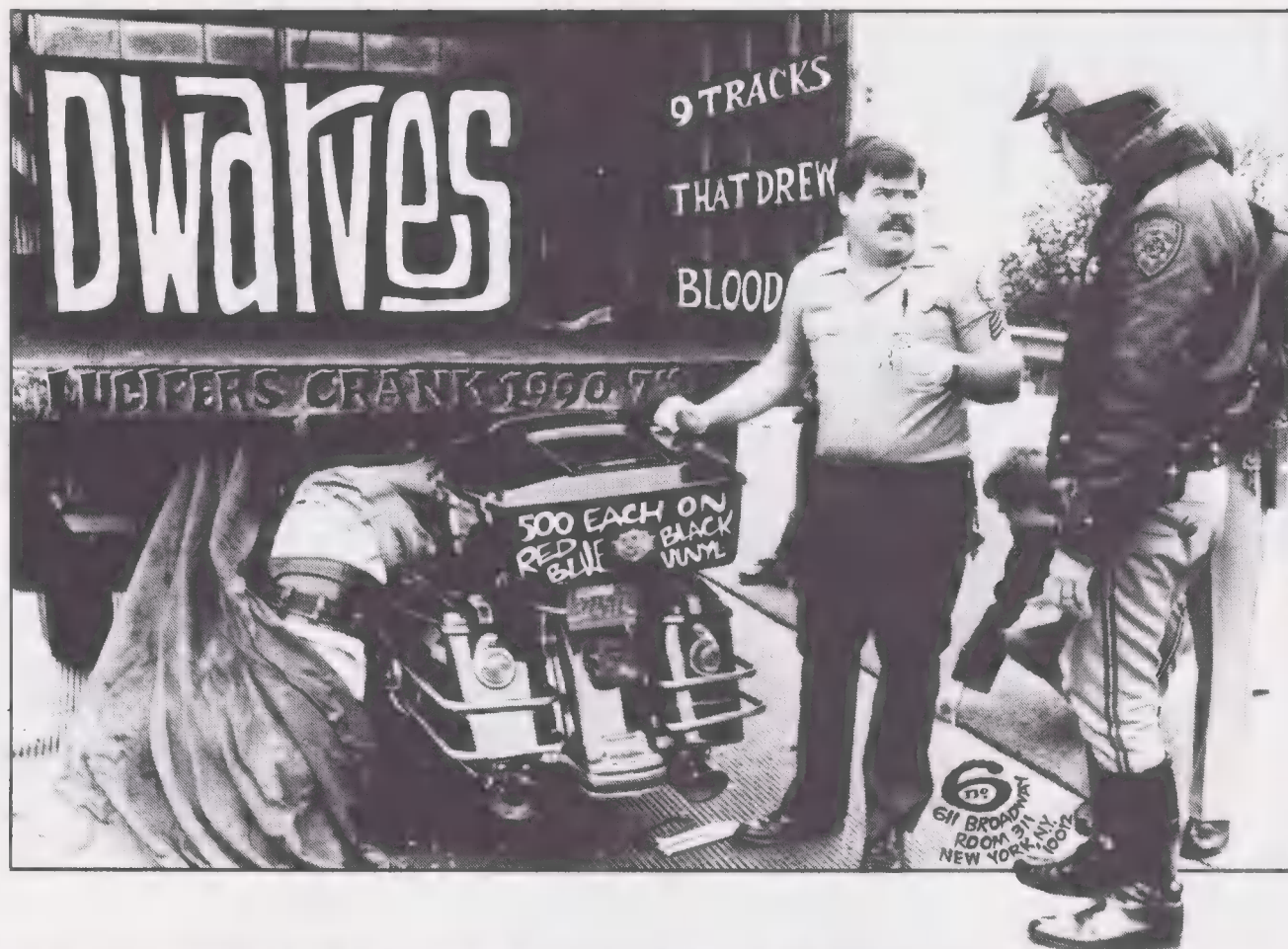
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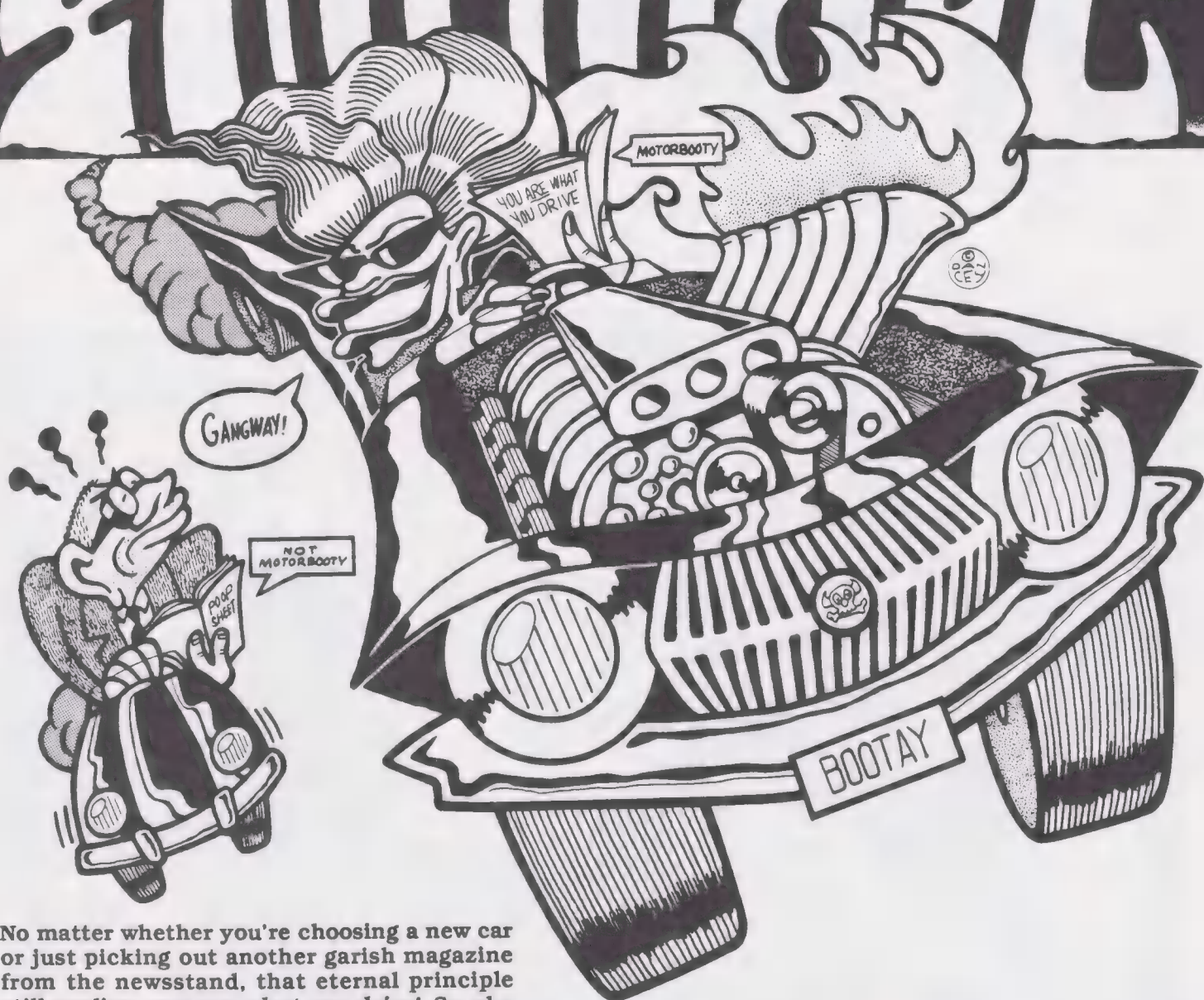
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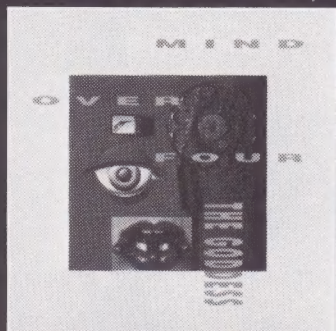
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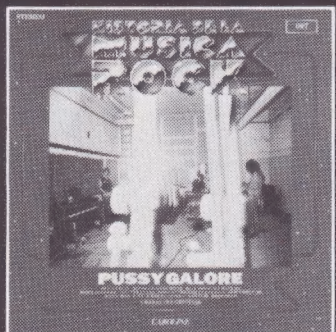
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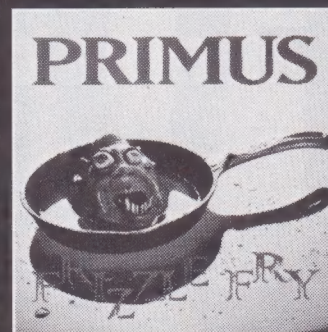


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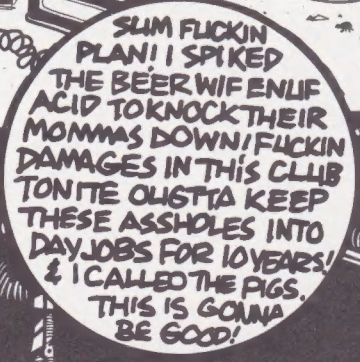
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